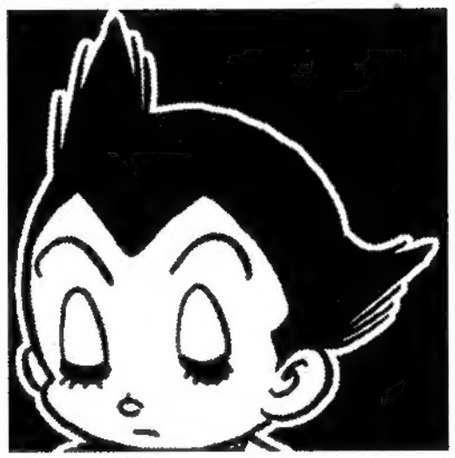
22
Osamu Tezuka's Original
ASTRO BOY



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ASTRO BOY

22

by

Osamu Tezuka

A LITTLE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

by **Osamu Tezuka**

In March of 1968, *Shonen*, the monthly magazine in which *Astro Boy* had been serialized, suddenly went out of business. After that, Astro had to adapt to the *Sankei* newspaper, where I serialized him for three years. These latter episodes appear in this series in volumes 6–8, under the title of *Once Upon a Time Astro Boy Tales*. *Astro Boy*, of course, did not end with the conclusion of the *Sankei* serialization, for as of this writing he is still occasionally appearing in a variety of formats in some publications and pamphlets. I will probably keep drawing him forever.

This supplement volume and its companion *[numbered as volumes 22 and 23 in this Dark Horse edition]* contain almost all of the *Astro Boy* stories that appeared outside of *Shonen* magazine and the *Sankei* newspaper. I also drew lots of single-shot Astro Boy illustrations, but in these supplemental volumes I'm only including work that has an actual storyline.

Astro stopped appearing in magazines and on television quite awhile ago, but I find that children of kindergarten age still know and love him, even outside the major metropolitan areas of Tokyo and Osaka. Most of these children are too young to have ever seen Astro on either television or in manga magazines, so I assume they must have learned about him from their parents. Needless to say, as the creator of the series, this makes me feel extremely honored.

In Japan, the final episode of the *Astro Boy* animated TV series was titled "*Chikyu Saidai No Boken*"("The World's Greatest Adventure"), and it ended with Astro plummeting into the sun. After the series ended, I received a mountain of letters asking me what had subsequently happened to Astro, begging me to save him if at all possible or somehow to bring him back to life. The manga story in this volume, titled "Astro Returns," therefore is based on the idea that Astro had really been rescued in space by aliens and returned to Earth, where he had to search for both his home and the era in which he used to live. The story was originally serialized in *Shogaku Yonensei* ("Fourth Grader"), and what appears in this compilation is the very beginning of the overall story; the rest was to be based on the idea that Astro had to make pilgrimages through a variety of different eras as a type of wanderer. Partly because the original story was first serialized in a magazine for grade-schoolers, I had to end it before I really wanted to.

In the same story, Astro wears a funny-looking type of armor, and he has a dial of sorts on his head. This was a new style I was experimenting with at the time, with the idea of possibly creating a sequel for the TV animation, but it did not prove very popular. *Planet of the Apes* was a popular movie around this time, so I also wove in a bit of parody using the idea of a "Planet of the Dogs."

I can't recall all the details for "The Bomb Train" episode, but I believe it first ran on the entire front page of a newspaper's special New Year's Day edition. It was probably showcased there because the TV series was then at the peak of its popularity.

"Silver Tower," (in the second supplement volume of this series), was created as part of a special manga feature on nostalgic manga. As far as I can recall, "Astro's First Love" originated in a similar sort of way.

"Showdown in the Standard Deviation Kingdom" came about because one day I was suddenly asked to draw an *Astro Boy* story for *Shukan Asahi* magazine. It was a complicated request, because the magazine's editors wanted me to have Astro tackle a contemporary social problem – that of Japan's over-reliance on standardized school tests. Until that point, I didn't know anything about standard deviation grading, nor did I have any particular interest in the subject. As a result, I really had to scramble, collecting information, reading books, and deluging my wife and friends with questions. But I learned a lot about the problem in the process.

"Slippery Catfish in Imminent Danger" first appeared in *Sunday Mainichi* magazine, as part of a manga special. It came about in an odd sort of way. Around the same time, I was also serializing a manga series called *Yoromeki Dobutsu Ki* ["Wobbly Animal Stories"] in the same magazine. Takashi Ishikawa, the man who worked with me there (and who is a well-known commentator on horse racing and science fiction and a famous science-fiction writer in his own right), asked me to put something – anything – together that would feature all my manga heroes in an entertaining way.

"Astro II" also came about in an odd way. The year that I drew it, I was awarded the *Bunshun* manga award. As a result, *Bungei Shunjū* magazine, which sponsored the award, asked me to draw an Astro story for its deluxe edition. Since *Bungei Shunjū*'s readers are mainly adults, I really agonized over how to create something that would interest them. You can read the result here in this volume. The ending to the story that I originally drew was actually much simpler, but when I showed it to my manager and my assistants, they said it was too childish. I was crushed, of course, and redrew the offending portion. Still, some readers said the final version (in this volume) ruined Astro's image, so the reaction was decidedly mixed.

"I Am Knowall" and "You're Guilty!" are technically not *Astro Boy* stories, but they are included because Astro makes guest appearances in them. I also drew another story of a similar ilk, titled "The Man Who Destroyed Earth", where Astro (with a crew cut, of all things) appears as a fighter pilot, but there wasn't enough room to include it in this collection.

"The Time Machine," "Brain Swap," and "Bad Guy Robots" are all short stories that ran in the *Astro Boy Club* magazine. This was a Mushi Productions PR magazine published while *Astro Boy* was being serialized on television. For more information, please refer to Vol. 17 of this series. All three stories were sort of in-jokes and not really much to brag about.

Finally, "The End of Astro Boy" was part of a feature on nostalgic manga in *Bessatsu Shonen* magazine [*Shonen* magazine supplement]. At the time, the radical student movement was at its peak, and many manga-and *gekiga* (the "dramatic pictures" style of comics) had become somewhat dark and nihilistic. My story was probably influenced by this, because whenever I go back and read it, the plot seems very dark and disturbing. Astro only makes a very brief appearance in this story, and I certainly don't consider it to be the final chapter in the Astro Boy saga.

— Osamu Tezuka, September 1976

ASTRO RETURNS

First serialized from April to September 1972 in *Shogaku Yonensei* magazine.

A STRANGE-LOOKING SPACE SHIP ENCOUNTERS WHAT SEEMS TO BE PART OF A METEOR, DRIFTING IN THE COLD VASTNESS OF OUTER SPACE...

CREEAK CREAK

HMPH. THIS SURE IS ODD-LOOKING... LOOKS LIKE A GIANT FISH CAKE ON A PLATTER...

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IT'S REALLY A *ROBOT* LYING ON A STEEL PLATE!

HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT... THERE'S AN *ELECTRO-BRAIN* BUILT INTO THIS THING!

DID YOU SAY *"ROBOT"*?

A REAL ROBOT?! WHICH PLANET IS HE FROM?!

QUIET, *SPICA!* I'M TRYING TO CATCH THE BRAIN WAVES THIS THING'S EMITTING AND PROJECT THEM ON A SCREEN...

HERE WE GO... IT'S *WORKING!* LOOK!

WHAT THE HECK IS *THAT?!*

THAT A PLANET?

THAT MUST BE HIS SOLAR SYSTEM'S *SUN...!*

YEOW! MY EYES HURT!

AIEEE!

WAIT! TAKE A LOOK AT THAT!

"IT'S A *ROBOT,* ABOUT TO DIVE INTO THE SUN! HE'S RIDING ON TOP OF SOME SORT OF STEEL BLOCK..."

"I'LL BET HE WAS MADE ON THAT SOLAR SYSTEM'S THIRD PLANET! HE MUST'VE LATCHED ONTO THAT CLUMP OF METAL AND, USING HIS OWN ROCKETS, ATTEMPTED TO PLUNGE INTO THE SUN..."

GENTLEMEN... I SUGGEST WE TRY TO RESTORE THIS ROBOT TO HIS ORIGINAL CONDITION.

WITH OUR LEVEL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, IT SHOULD BE EASY...

GET OUT OF HERE, SPICA!

I...I JUST *HAVE* TO SEE HIM...

BEEP

FSSSST

FWWP

REMOVE THE RIVETS THERE!

ZAP ZAP

BZZT

BZZZT BZZZT

WELL, IT'S NOT A PARTICULARLY *ADVANCED* ROBOT... THEY SELL THIS LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY AT THE *TOY STORE!*

HMMMMM

SCREEE SCREE

BZZZT

BUZZZZ

BUZZZ

ZAP ZAP

BZZT

BZZT BZZT

BEEP

SPICA! NO *PEEPING!*

.....

FWP

I CAN STILL SEE YOU, EVEN IN *PARTICLE FORM!*

THIS ROBOT'S NOT LIKE YOU, SPICA. HE'S NOT MADE OF ELECTRO-CELLS!

HE'S MUCH MORE PRIMITIVE! LOOK, HIS BODY'S A MACHINE!

I DON'T *CARE* HOW PRIMITIVE HE IS, AS LONG AS HE'S A *ROBOT!* AN' BESIDES, HE'S A *BOY!* I'M *INTER-ESTED!*

STILL LOOKS WAY TOO PRIMITIVE TO ME...

WELL, IF WE'RE REALLY GOING TO RESTORE HIM...

... WE OUGHT TO TURN HIM INTO A MORE *DELUXE, HIGH-PER-FORMANCE* ROBOT

FSSST

BZZT

BZZT

WE'LL GIVE HIM A BREASTPLATE, MAKE HIS ARTIFICIAL SKIN TEN TIMES STRONGER, AND ADD A THIRD EYE...

AFTER ALL...

...WITH ONLY *TWO* EYES, HE LOOKS KIND OF *STUPID!*

HI, CAN YOU SEE ME?! WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SONNY?

A... S... TRO...

WH...WHERE AM I?! I'M NOT ON EARTH, AM I?!

EARTH?! NEVER HEARD OF THE PLACE. WE'RE FROM THE PLANET *LULULU* ...

YOU PROBABLY DON'T RECALL IT, BUT YOU WERE DRIFTING THROUGH SPACE, IN A HALF-MELTED STATE!

I...I *DON'T* REMEMBER...

I KNOW I'M A *ROBOT* FROM EARTH...

...BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ELSE! NOT A *THING!*

WELL, WHAT'LL WE DO WITH THE ROBOT? TAKE HIM BACK TO LULULU?

NOPE... I SAY WE OUGHT TO RETURN HIM TO HIS OWN PLANET...

I... I...

...I WANNA GO *HOME.*

SPICA!
COME HERE!
WHAT IS IT, CAPTAIN?!
LISTEN, SPICA... DO YOU *LIKE* THAT ROBOT CALLED ASTRO?
GEE... GOSH... WELL...
DO I *LIKE* HIM?!
YOU MEAN YOU *DON'T* LIKE HIM?
NO, I DON'T *DISLIKE* HIM...
BLUSH
LOOK AT YOU, SPICA...
HOW CAN YOU ASK SUCH A QUESTION, CAPTAIN?
AH, BUT THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ROBOTS FALLING IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER, SPICA...
YOU MEAN, I CAN *MARRY* HIM!?
NO, YOU IDIOT! YOU'RE STILL A *CHILD!*

ACTUALLY, WE'RE THINKING OF RETURNING HIM TO HIS HOME PLANET...
YOU'RE *WHAT*?!
NO, CAPTAIN, *NO!!*
BETTER SAY GOODBYE TO HIM *NOW!*
NO! NO! NO! NO!
I DON'T WANNA SAY GOODBYE TO ASTRO BOY!
CALM DOWN, SPICA! IT'S UN-BECOMING!
P-PLEASE, CAPTAIN! IF YOU HAVE TO DO THIS... PLEASE LET ME GO *WITH* ASTRO...
WELL... I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING, SPECIFICALLY, TO PREVENT THAT...
...BUT I'VE GOT MY *CON-DITIONS!*
I..I'LL DO *ANY-THING*, CAPTAIN!
I'LL EVEN CLEAN THE SHIP TOILETS! *HONEST!*
NO... I WANT YOU TO BE OUR *SPY* ON EARTH!

UNDER-STAND, SPICA?!

YOU'RE TO INVESTIGATE EVERYTHING ON EARTH AND REPORT *BACK* TO US!

B... BUT THEN WHAT, CAP'N?

WELL, IF EARTH'S A *GOOD* PLANET, WE'LL HELP THE EARTHLINGS. BUT IF IT'S NOT, IF IT'S HOPELESS, WE'LL HAVE TO *DESTROY* IT...

...AND MAKE SURE ASTRO BOY DOESN'T REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE *DOING!!*

.....
.....

UNLESS I COMMAND YOU OTHERWISE, AFTER THREE YEARS YOU ARE TO BURROW TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH AND *EXPLODE!*

I... I UNDER-STAND...

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FAMILY AT ALL, ASTRO BOY...?

NO...

I CAN'T RECALL A THING ABOUT MY HOME, MY FAMILY, OR WHERE I'M FROM... BUT... BUT I KNOW I HAD A FAMILY... A KIND MOTHER, A BROTHER, AND EVEN A SISTER.

IF I CLOSE MY EYES AND IMAGINE THINGS, I CAN SORT OF SEE A VAGUE IMAGE OF WHAT IT USED TO BE LIKE... BUT I DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHERE IT WAS, OR EVEN WHAT AGE IT WAS IN...

SO I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE I SHOULD GO HOME TO...

PLEASE... TELL ME WHERE I'M *FROM!*

DON'T FEEL SO BAD, ASTRO...

YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND YOUR HOME AND FAMILY, THAT'S ALL... AND WHEN YOU DO, YOU'LL REMEMBER EVERYTHING...

B-BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO EVEN START...

WE PUT A *DIAL* ON YOUR HEAD, YOU KNOW...

WHOOPS! DON'T TOUCH THAT THING!

IT GIVES YOU A SPECIAL *POWER*...

SO YOU CAN USE IT TO TRY TO LOCATE THE AGE IN WHICH YOU LIVED, ASTRO...

IF YOU TURN IT TO THE *RIGHT*, YOU'LL GO *BACK* IN TIME... IF YOU TURN IT TO THE *LEFT*, YOU'LL GO INTO THE *FUTURE*... IN OTHER WORDS, IT ALLOWS *TIME TRAVEL!*

USE IT PROPERLY, AND YOU CAN TRAVEL ANYWHERE IN A 300,000,000 YEAR RANGE!

GOSH, MISTER... THANKS!

I WANNA GO HOME *RIGHT AWAY!*

WELL, IT'S FINALLY TIME FOR US TO PART, ASTRO BOY...

BE CAREFUL ON YOUR JOURNEY...

DON'T WORRY, YOU WON'T BE ALONE, BECAUSE SPICA HERE INSISTS ON GOING *WITH* YOU!

GOSH, I'D *LOVE* TO HAVE HER WITH ME...

WELL, SHE WON'T GET IN YOUR WAY...

SEE?

SHE CAN TURN HERSELF INTO ANY OBJECT TO GO WITH YOU...

SPICA'S BODY IS MADE OF VERY FINE METAL PARTICLES, ASTRO...

...AND SHE CAN CHANGE HER SHAPE BY CHANGING THE WAY SHE COMBINES THEM...

VOOOSH

AND NOW WE MUST PART... HAVE A GOOD TRIP, ASTRO BOY...

AIM FOR THE *THIRD PLANET* IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM!

VOOOSH

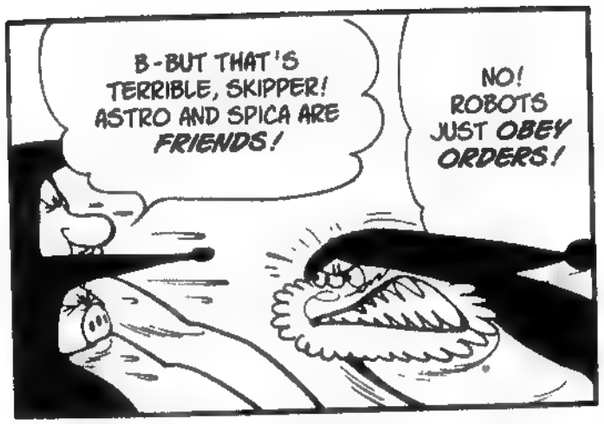
CAPTAIN... WHAT SORT OF PLANET WAS ASTRO BOY CREATED ON?

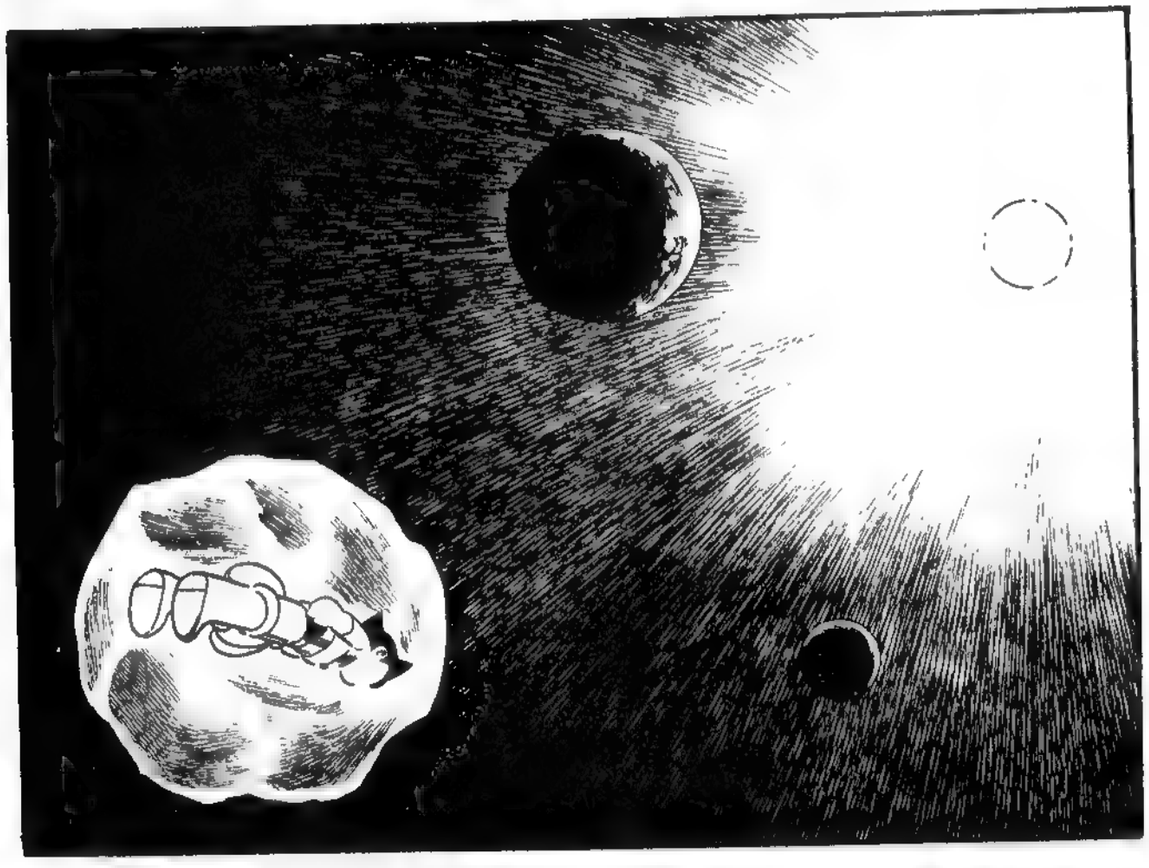
WELL, IT'S REALLY NOT M!CH OF A PLANET AT ALL...

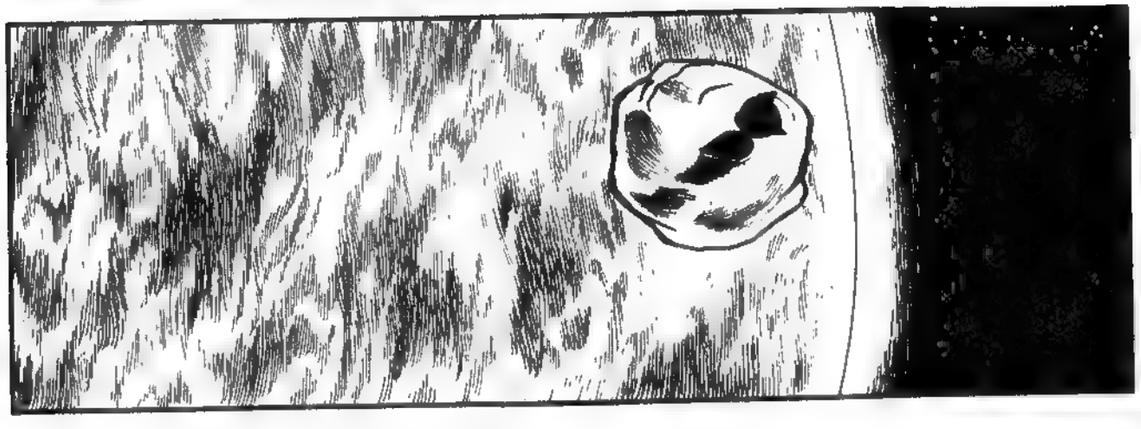
BUT IF ASTRO BOY REALIZES SHE'S A SPY...

NOW... AS SOON AS THEY REACH EARTH, SPICA SHOULD START COMMUNICATING BACK TO US REGULARLY...

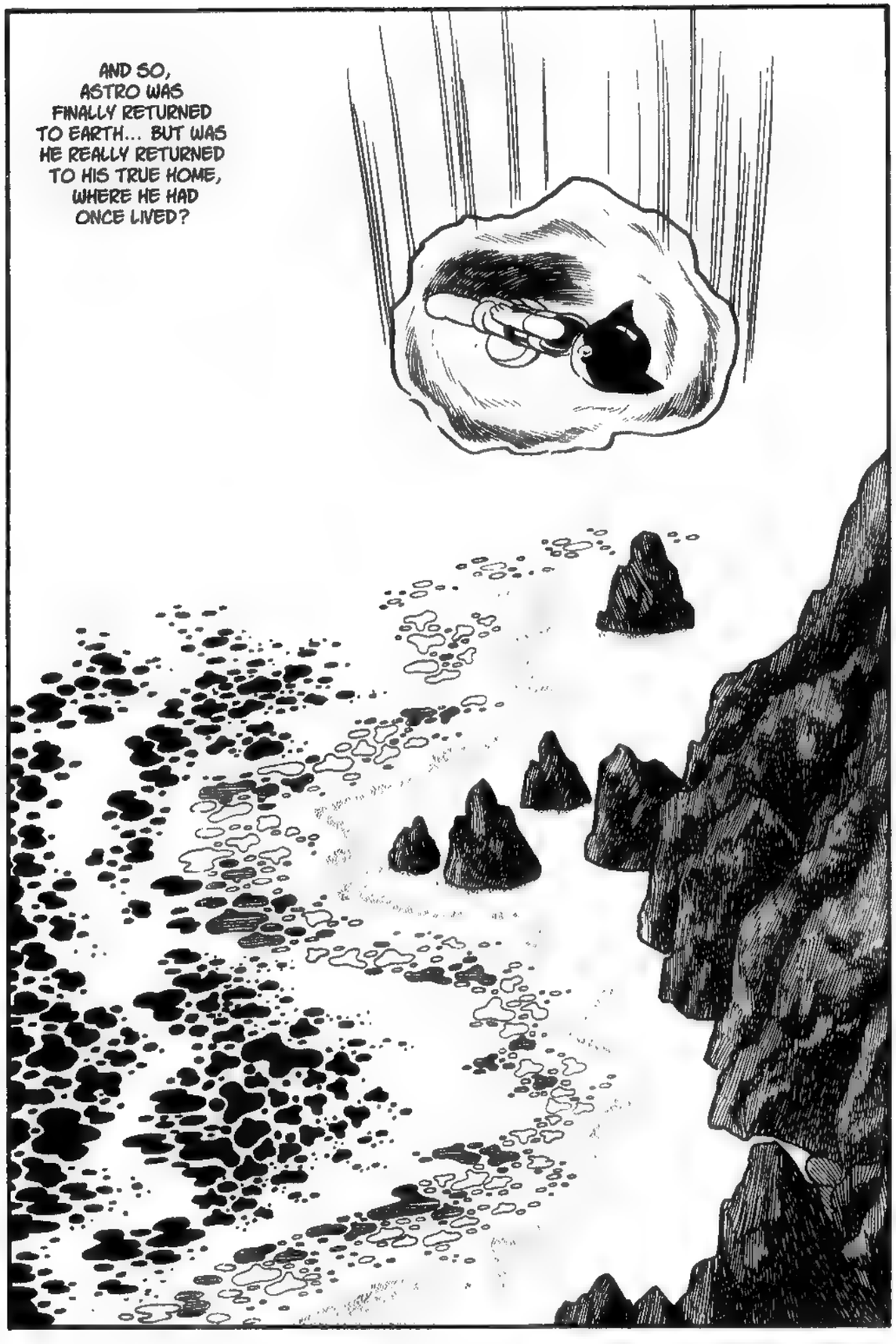
... WE'LL HAVE TO *DESTROY* HIM...







AND SO, ASTRO WAS FINALLY RETURNED TO EARTH... BUT WAS HE REALLY RETURNED TO HIS TRUE HOME, WHERE HE HAD ONCE LIVED?



KABASH!

BONK BONK

FWOOP

HALP! ASTRO! I'M BEING ATTACKED!

ASTRO! ARE YOU OKAY?

OH MY GOSH...

SPICA REPORTING TO CAPTAIN! WE HAVE LANDED ON EARTH... ALLOW ME TO DESCRIBE THE VIEW...

EEEK!

UH OH! SPICA'S IN TROUBLE!

TAKE *THIS*, YOU MONSTER!

AIEEE!!!

SPICA!

WHERE ARE YOU?!

DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE BEEN EATEN BY THESE GUYS!

OVER *HERE*, ASTRO!

WAIT, ASTRO! IT'S *ME*!! SPICA!

WHAT?!

Y-YOU MEAN YOU TRANSFORMED YOURSELF INTO A LEOPARD?! AND I THREW YOU?!

I...I WAS *AFRAID*!!

WELL, *YOU* SURE ARE LUCKY! IN A PINCH, YOU CAN SAVE YOURSELF BY TRANSFORMING INTO ANYTHING, CAN'T YOU...?

D-DON'T BE *ANGRY* WITH ME, ASTRO...

I WAS REALLY ABOUT TO BE *EATEN*! I HAD TO DO *SOMETHING*!

UNLIKE YOU, IF I'M TORN APART OR CUT TO PIECES, I CAN'T BE REPAIRED...

...AND IN ANOTHER SECOND THEY WOULD'VE RIPPED ME TO *SHREDS*...

GOSH, ASTRO... WHAT KIND OF ANIMAL'S *THAT*?!

GEE, I KNOW WE'RE ON EARTH, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN THAT THING BEFORE...

WHAT ABOUT *THOSE* THINGS?!

THOSE'RE *HUMANS!*

NO, WAIT... MAYBE THEY'RE *APES!*

I NEED TO SEE THIS...

AGAAHE

GAAHE
GAAHE

THEY'RE RUNNING AWAY! GOSH, THEY SURE ARE SCAREDY-CATS!

ARGHE...

ARGHE...

THEY'RE NOT VERY SMART ANIMALS, ARE THEY, ASTRO...?

THEY'RE TERRIFIED RIGHT NOW! THEY MUST'VE BEEN EATING SHELLFISH OR CRABS BY THE SEA...

ARE THEY REALLY HUMANS ?!

NO... THEY'RE PROBABLY APES... I THINK WE'RE IN AN AGE *BEFORE* HUMANS APPEARED...

ARGHE...

THEY CAN SWIM PRETTY GOOD...

THEY MUST LIVE IN THOSE CAVES THERE...

"THESE APES LIVE BY THE SEA..."

"...THEY SWIM WITH THEIR HEADS OUT OF THE WATER ALL THE TIME... SO MAYBE THAT'S WHY THEY DON'T NEED FUR ON THEIR BODIES..."

LOOK!

HEY... ONE OF THE FEMALES LOOKS LIKE SHE'S *SICK!*

YOU'RE RIGHT... SHE'S *TREMBLING...*

HER CHILDREN'RE TAKING CARE OF HER...

ASTRO... YOU CAN MAKE MEDICINE INSIDE YOUR BODY, RIGHT? WHY DON'T YOU MAKE SOMETHING FOR HER?

WONDER WHERE THAT BOY'S GOING?

LOOKS LIKE A PRETTY CLEVER KID...

MAYBE WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIM...

SNAP

SNORT

LOOK... HE'S HEADED FOR THAT *VOLCANO!*

WONDER WHAT HE WANTS WITH A VOLCANO?

SNORT

SNORTTLE

WATCH OUT!!

KERTHUMP

KAVOOM

UH OH! HE'S HEADED FOR THE MOUTH OF THE VOLCANO! HE'S IN TROUBLE!

SCREEEE

SCREEEEE

BAM

WHAP

KA BONK

DUNNO WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO, BUT IF YOU'RE TRYING TO CATCH THESE MONSTERS, LEAVE IT UP TO ME...

?

LOOK, SPICA! HE'S PUTTING A STICK INTO THE VOLCANO'S LAVA! I BET HE CAME HERE TO GET SOME *FIRE!*

BORAAA!

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

LOOK, SPICA... HE'S GOT FIRE NOW! HE'S NO APE... HE'S A *HUMAN!* ONE OF THE ANCESTORS OF HUMANS!

RUMBLE RUMBLE

UH OH... THE VOLCANO'S *ERUPTING!!*

RUMBLE

RUMBLE

WATCH OUT, ASTRO! YOU CAN'T STOP THIS THE WAY YOU DID THOSE ANIMALS EARLIER!

LET ME GO, SPICA! IF HE'S AN ANCESTOR OF HUMANS, I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!

SMASH!

HERE I GO!

THERE'S *TOO MANY* OF THEM, ASTRO! YOU CAN'T FIGHT A *VOLCANO!*

SMASH

SMASH

RUN FOR IT, KID! GET OFF THE MOUNTAIN *NOW!!*

ASTRO! IF YOU KEEP THIS UP, YOU'LL RUN OUT OF *ENERGY!!* THEN WHAT'LL YOU DO?!

KA BO NNK

THAT'S FOR *ME* TO WORRY ABOUT, SPICA... NOT YOU!

KA VA VOOOOOM

MOOO!

MOOO!

ASTRO!! THE VOLCANO'S SPEWING RED-HOT *LAVA!*

HERE... HANG ON TO ME...

YOU TOO, SPICA...

SWOOOSH

AGHH!

WH... WHAT IS IT, ASTRO?!

KER THUD

YOU RUN OUT OF *ENERGY* P!

D-DON'T YOU FEEL ANYTHING, SPICA?

THIS IS REALLY WEIRD...

I'VE BEEN SUCKED AGAINST THIS ROCK WALL, AND I CAN'T *MOVE!!*

ABU-CHUB-YURNA ...

THIS ROCK'S LIKE A POWERFUL *MAGNET*, SPICA!

I'VE GOT SEVERAL METALS IN MY BODY THAT MAGNETS ATTRACT...

YOU'RE NOT AFFECTED AT ALL?!

NO... THE METALS IN ME ARE OKAY...

HERE, I'LL TRY TO PULL YOU OFF...

WE CAN'T GET YOU TO BUDGE, ASTRO...

PULLING ALONE'S GONNA BE USELESS...

AND BE CAREFUL... YOU'LL PULL MY HANDS OFF!!

LOOK, ASTRO! IT'S A HUGE *LAVA FLOW!*

RUN FOR IT, SPICA! YOU CAN SAVE *YOUR-SELF*... AND TAKE THE *BOY* WITH YOU...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, SPICA!

I CAN SURVIVE EVEN IF THE LAVA COVERS ME, BUT THE BOY *CAN'T!*

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT... WE'VE GOT TO GET HIM AWAY...

TAKE HIM SOMEWHERE SAFE WHILE YOU STILL CAN!!

I *KNOW* YOU CAN DO IT, SPICA!

B-BUT ASTRO...

I'LL COME BACK TO HELP YOU, ASTRO... I *PROMISE!*

JUST HURRY UP AND GET HIM TO SAFETY!

HERE COMES THE LAVA... BUT I WON'T LET IT GET ME...

WH-WHAT'S THAT?!

KABOOOOM

YIKES!

VOOOSH

SPLOOSH

KALOMP

KALOMP

KALOMP

KALOMP

GOSH... THE ADULTS HAVE ALL COME OUT TO GREET US...

ANABO!

THEY LOOK SO *HAPPY!* IT MUST BE REALLY HARD FOR THEM TO GET FIRE!!

YAY

YAY

YAY

ARGH

MAAAMA...

ABOH... ABOH...

MAAMA... FUNYA CHI KUI...

I GET IT... THE MOTHER WAS SICK WITH A COLD... SO HER SON WENT TO BRING HER SOME *FIRE*...

SPICA TO CAPTAIN... SPICA REPORTING TO CAPTAIN ON SHIP NO. 333... NO. 333, COME IN PLEASE...

I HAVE ENCOUNTERED MY FIRST HUMAN-LIKE CREATURES... I HAVE WITNESSED THE BEAUTIFUL LOVE BETWEEN A MOTHER AND HER CHILD....

EARTH DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A BAD PLANET AT ALL... I AWAIT YOUR COM-MAND ...

UH OH... I NEARLY FORGOT...

I NEARLY FORGOT ALL ABOUT *ASTRO!!*

FSSS

WAIT! IT'S *ALIVE*...

IT'S YELLING SOMETHING...

LET HIM GO...

BZZZT BZZZT BZZZT

BZZZT BZZZT

I THOUGHT IT WAS A *TALKING* WALNUT...

OKAY, I STOPPED THE MACHINE...

STUCK TO THAT ROCK, HE LOOKS LIKE A *BARNACLE*...

I'M STUCK BECAUSE MY BODY'S GOT *IRON* IN IT, THAT'S WHY!

I'M A *ROBOT!*

WHAT'S A ROBOT, ANYWAY? SOME KIND OF THIEF?

LET'S ASK *GOD*...

TAKE HIM TO THE TEMPLE...

O, ALMIGHTY GOD...

THUD...

CHAK

WOW... I CAME FREE...

THE MAGNETISM MUST'VE *DISAP-PEARED*...

WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE, ROBOT? AND WHERE ARE YOU FROM?!

WH-WHO'RE YOU?!

ARE YOU A ROBOT, TOO?!

I DON'T *KNOW* WHERE I'M FROM...

ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'M A ROBOT MADE BY HUMANS ON EARTH. AND I WANT TO GO *HOME*...

THIS IS NOT YOUR HOME...

I... I KNOW ...

YOU MUST TRANSMIT HISTORY FOR THE SAKE OF ALL HUMANS! OUR TIME IS SOON COMING TO AN END!

HACK COUGH HACK

"LONG, LONG AGO... TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS GO... THE WORLD OF HUMANS WAS ***DESTROYED*** THROUGH ***POLLUTION*** AND ***WAR***. THE HUMANS DESTROYED THEMSELVES... ONLY A FEW SURVIVORS ENTRUSTED THE HISTORY OF ALL MANKIND WITH ME..."

"SINCE THEN, I HAVE WAITED FOR WHAT SEEMS AN ETERNITY FOR A ***NEW RACE OF HUMANS*** TO APPEAR..."

SO YOU MEAN THE APE-LIKE CREATURES I SAW EARLIER ARE REALLY PRIMITIVE ***HUMANS*** ?!

YES, THEY ARE THE NEW RACE OF HUMANS I AM TALKING ABOUT.

GOSH... I THOUGHT THIS WAS EARTH IN THE DISTANCE ***PAST***...

...BUT MAYBE IT'S REALLY THE DISTANT ***FUTURE!!***

I GUESS I'VE GOTTA GO BACK EVEN ***FURTHER*** IN THE PAST...

YOU MUST NOT!!

BUT WHY?! I'M LOOKING FOR THE WORLD THAT I WAS BORN INTO!!

NO!

YOU SHALL NOT LEAVE HERE!

IT'S USE-LESS TO TRY!!

WE HAVE TURNED OFF YOUR TIME MACHINE CAPABILITY!

I AM *GOD!* I WILL GIVE YOU ORDERS! FROM NOW ON YOU MUST SERVE *ME!*

NO! YOU'RE ONLY A *ROBOT,* LIKE *ME!!*

DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY, MEN!

VOOSH VOOSH VOOSH VOOSH

RATATATATAT

}AIEE!¢ HAALP!

O, GOD! HAVE *MERCY* ON US!

FLASH

IF YOU CHOOSE TO DEFY ME AND TO LEAVE HERE...

...LET IT BE AFTER DEFEATING ME, ROBOT!

WHA P!

UH OH...

KA THUNK

ARRRGH...

KRAAACK

GROAAR!!

WHY YOU ...

FLASH

HOW *DARE* YOU TEAR OFF MY HAND! I SHALL RIP YOU TO *SHREDS*!!

VROOM VROOM VROOM VROOM

KA BOOOM

O, GOD... YOUR *HAND*... I MEAN YOUR FRONT *PAW*... IT'S BEEN *TORN OFF*...

FSSSSH FSSSSH FSSSSHT

WOW... IT'S BACK ON!!

WOW... HE REALLY *IS* GOD...

BUT WHERE IS HE HIDING ?!!

OVER *HERE!* OVER *HERE!*

IT'S EASIER TO FIGHT OVER HERE!

WELL, WELL... SO YOU DIDN'T RUN AWAY... HOW *NICE*...

IF I WIN, YOU'LL RESTORE MY TIME TRAVEL POWER, RIGHT ?!

OF COURSE I WILL... BUT YOU'LL ONLY GET YOUR POWER BACK...

...WHEN YOU *DEFEAT* ME, ROBOT!

YIKES!

HOW 'BOUT *THAT*, ROBOT?!

CRUNCH

FWP

FLIP

BASH

AIEEE!

WELL, WELL... LOOK AT YOU NOW... I THINK I'VE FOUND YOUR *WEAK SPOT!!*

UH OH...

PREPARE TO MEET YOUR END!!

YIKES...

HMMMM...

TAKE THIS!!

KABASH

ARGH....

AGAGAAH!

SNAP

BAM

BOOOM

TAKE THIS 'N THIS 'N THIS!!

KERTHUD

GO ON... FINISH ME OFF!

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! WHY DON'T YOU SMASH ME?! THEN IT WOULD *TRULY* BE YOUR VICTORY!

UNLESS YOU DESTROY ME, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO USE YOUR TIME TRAVEL POWER!

WELL, YOU SAID YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF ALL HUMAN HISTORY...

... SO IF I DESTROY YOU, ALL RECORDS OF HUMAN *HISTORY* 'LL BE RUINED!

SO I'M *NOT* GOING TO DE-STROY YOU ...

YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY...

THANK YOU...

YOU ARE A FINE LITTLE ROBOT...

I TRIED TO KEEP YOU HERE BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID THAT IF YOU TIME-TRAVELED TO OTHER TIMES AND PLACES, YOU WOULD CREATE HUGE *DISTURBANCES*...

BUT NOW I KNOW THAT I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOU... SO YOU MAY *LEAVE*...

UHA P!

YOU CAN TRAVEL THROUGH TIME AGAIN... SEARCH FOR YOUR ERA AND THE PLACE OF YOUR BIRTH...

WOLF-MEN!

TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS BOY. GET HIM READY TO TRAVEL AGAIN...

YESSIR!

WONDER WHAT WE SHOULD DO FOR HIM?

SQUEAK

POLISH

WELL, WE CAN AT LEAST POLISH HIM UP, I S'POSE...

AS FOR ME... I SHALL NO LONGER MOVE AGAIN... I SHALL SIT STILL HERE FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS, UNTIL I DISAPPEAR... UNTIL A NEW RACE OF HUMANS APPEARS...

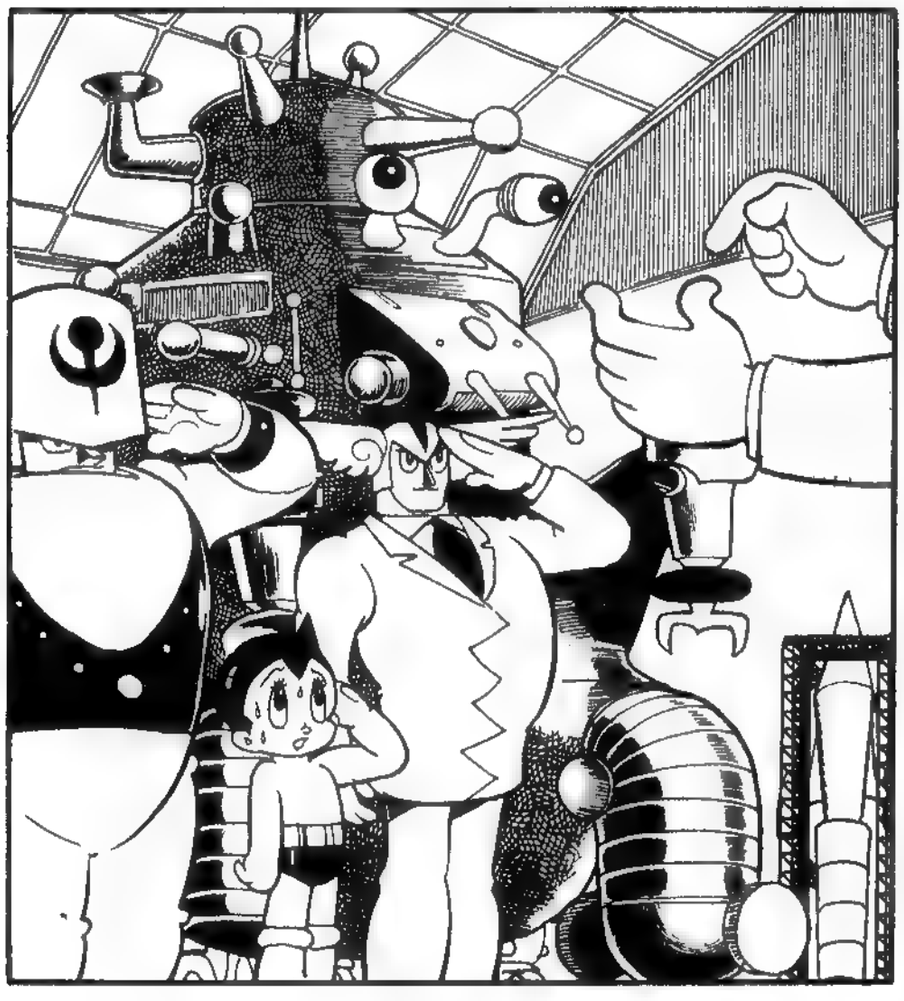
FARE-WELL, MR. GOD...

SCREEE

THE GOD WITH WHOM ASTRO HAD FOUGHT HIS BATTLE THUS REMAINED SITTING ON THE EDGE OF THE DESERT... AFTER TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS, HE TURNED TO STONE AND BECAME KNOWN AS *"THE SPHINX"*...

THE BOMB TRAIN

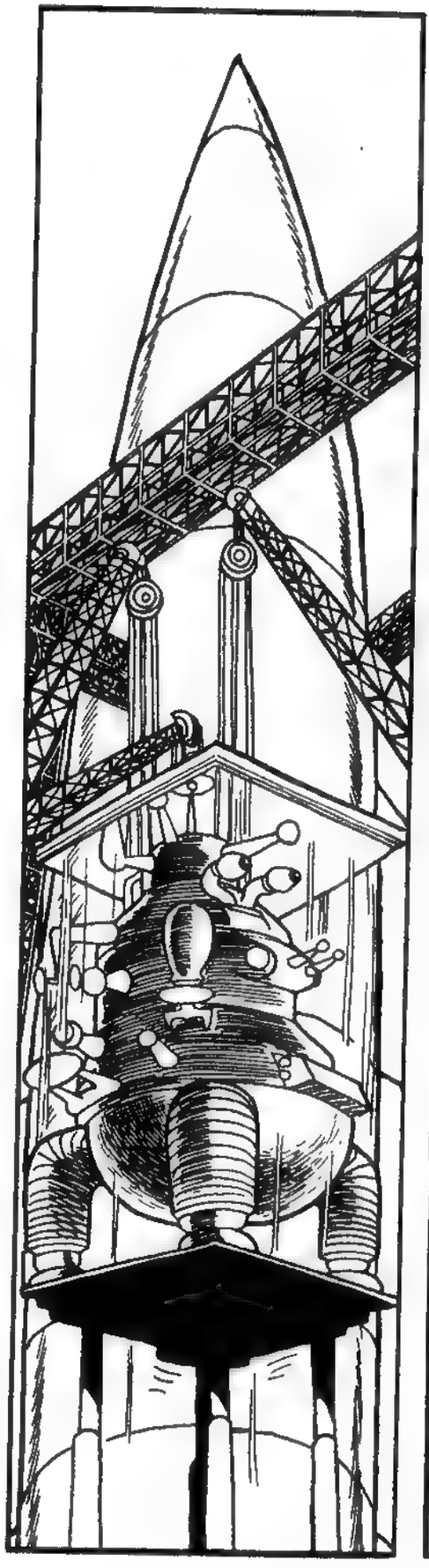
First appeared in the January 1, 1968 edition of the *Sankei* newspaper.



"ROYS III FROM AMERICA, ROBONOV FROM RUSSIA, AND ASTRO BOY FROM JAPAN... I'VE ASKED THE THREE OF YOU TO COME HERE PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS TRIPS. I WANT YOU TO DISPOSE OF A SUPER-HIGH POWERED BOMB, NAMED HYSTERIA, IN OUTER SPACE..."

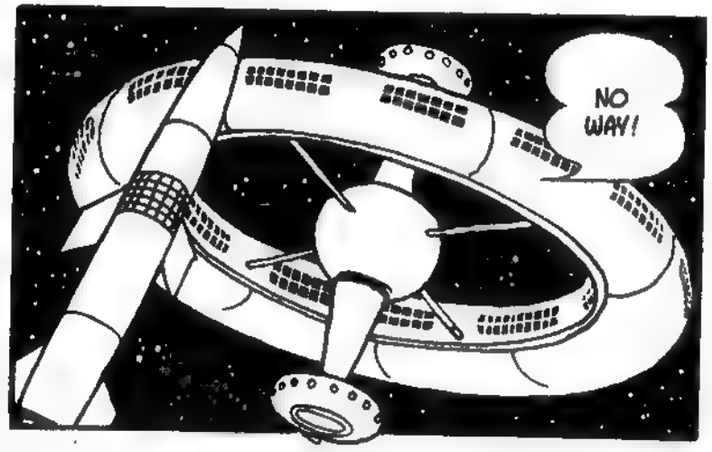
WITH TREMBLING HANDS, DR. MOSS, THE HEAD OF THE UNITED NATIONS' SPACE AGENCY, THUS POINTED AT A STRANGE MACHINE AND DECLARED...

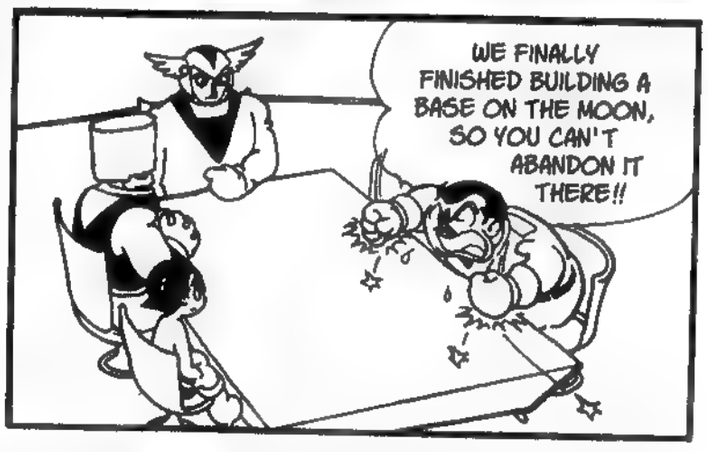
"THIS WAS MADE BY THE WORLD FAMOUS, GENIUS MAD SCIENTIST, DR. TENDY KRAYZ, A SPECIALIST IN ATOMIC POWER. TOUCH IT IN THE WRONG PLACE, AND IT'LL BLOW US ALL SKY HIGH..."



"THIS BOMB IS ACTUALLY POWERFUL ENOUGH TO BLOW UP THE WHOLE WORLD, BUT WE CAN'T TAKE IT APART! JUST WHEN DR. KRAYZ FINISHED IT, HE MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED, AND IT'LL BLOW UP IF WE TOUCH IT! THAT'S WHY I'VE ASKED YOU THREE TO COME HERE, TO HELP DISPOSE OF THIS THING."

WITH THAT, THE BOMB CALLED "HYSTERIA" WAS GENTLY LOADED ONTO A SPACE SHIP...





HAVE A SAFE TRIP, GUYS! HEH HEH...

OKAY, MEN... THE ROBOTS'RE LOADING THE BOMB ON A SPACE CARGO SHIP THAT'S ABOUT TO TAKE OFF... I WANT YOU TO ***ATTACK*** IT AND ***STEAL*** THE BOMB... TRY TO GRAB IT AROUND PLUTO...

THE JUNK SPACE TRAIN'S ABOUT TO DEPART...

ALL ABOARD... NOW LEAVING ...

THE BOMB'S LOADED ON THE LAST CAR...

I SAY WE OUGHTA DISPOSE OF IT ON VENUS!

VENUS?! NO WAY! I SAY *MARS!*

NO, *VENUS!*

HEY, GUYS! STOP ARGUING LIKE THIS!

I'M NOT GONNA GO ALONG WITH THIS NUT!

STOP IT OR ELSE, GUYS!

YOW! ASTRO'S STRONGER THAN I *THOUGHT!*

LISTEN, IF YOU GUYS REALLY CAN'T GET ALONG ...

...I'LL MAKE SURE YOU *CAN'T* FIGHT ...

... BY SWITCHING YOUR UPPER TORSOS!

JACK!

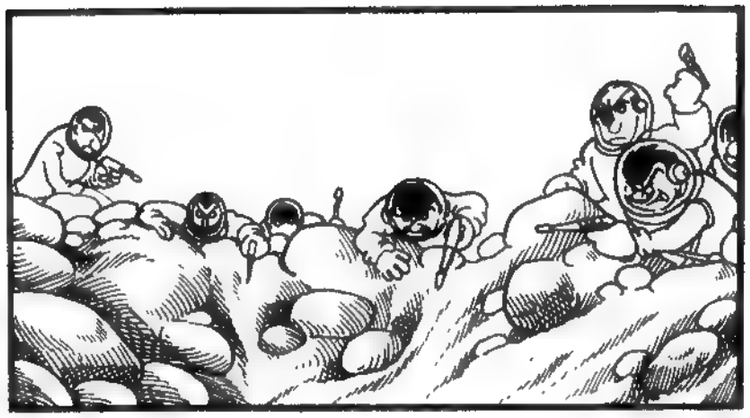
SINCE VENUS WAS EXTREMELY UNSTABLE, AND RIFE WITH VIOLENT WINDS AND VOLCANIC EXPLOSIONS, THE ROBOTS FIRST DECIDED TO TRY ABANDONING HYSTERIA ON MARS. UNLIKE VENUS, MARS IS QUITE STABLE, AND IT HAS LOTS OF CRATERS LIKE THE EARTH'S MOON.

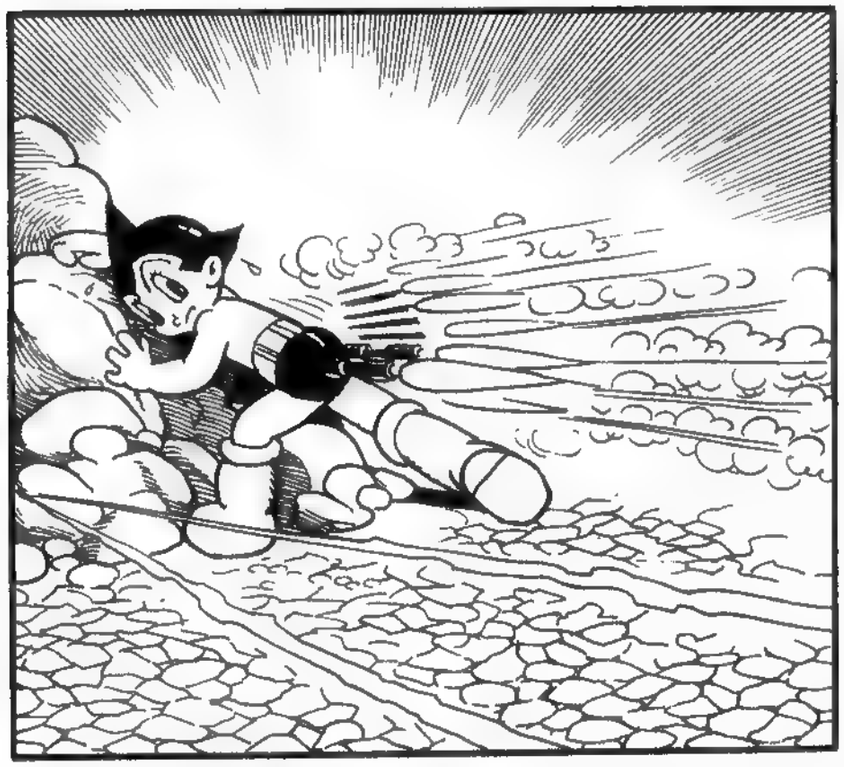
ASTRO AND HIS COMPANIONS GENTLY PLACED HYSTERIA ON THE SURFACE OF MARS AND WERE ABOUT TO LEAVE, WHEN SOME MOLE-LIKE CREATURES GATHERED AROUND THEM, ANGRILY YELLING WITH A "PEEEP PEEEP" SOUND...

USING HIS ELECTRO-BRAIN, ASTRO TRANSLATED WHAT THE CREATURES WERE SAYING, AND IT TURNED OUT THAT IT WAS MARTIAN FOR "GET THAT THING OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW!"

"IN ANCIENT TIMES OUR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WAS TOO ADVANCED, SO WE MADE A BOMB LIKE THAT. BUT IT ACCIDENTALLY EXPLODED AND DESTROYED OUR CIVILIZATION! WE DON'T WANT ANY MORE BOMBS! GET THAT THING OUT OF HERE!"

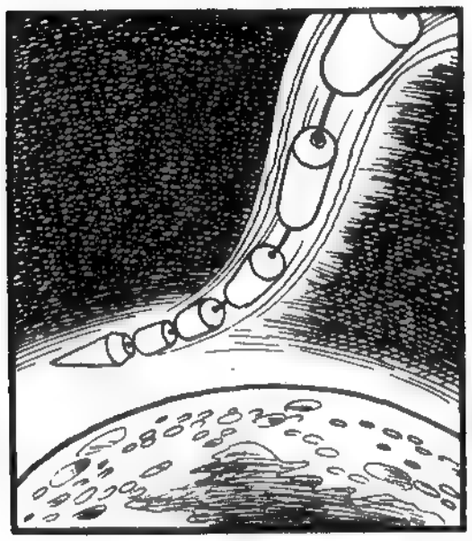
AS A RESULT, ASTRO AND HIS FRIENDS FINALLY DECIDED TO TAKE THE BOMB TO PLUTO AFTER ALL... BUT THERE, THE THREE ROBOTS WERE SUDDENLY ATTACKED BY A GANG OF SPACE PIRATES!

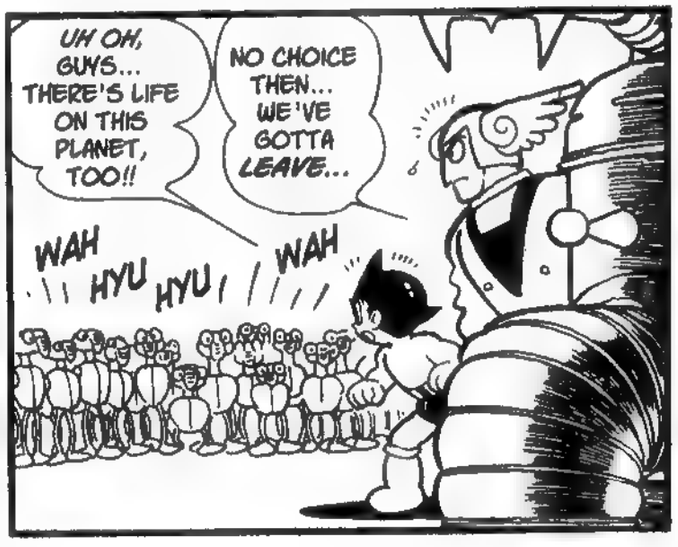


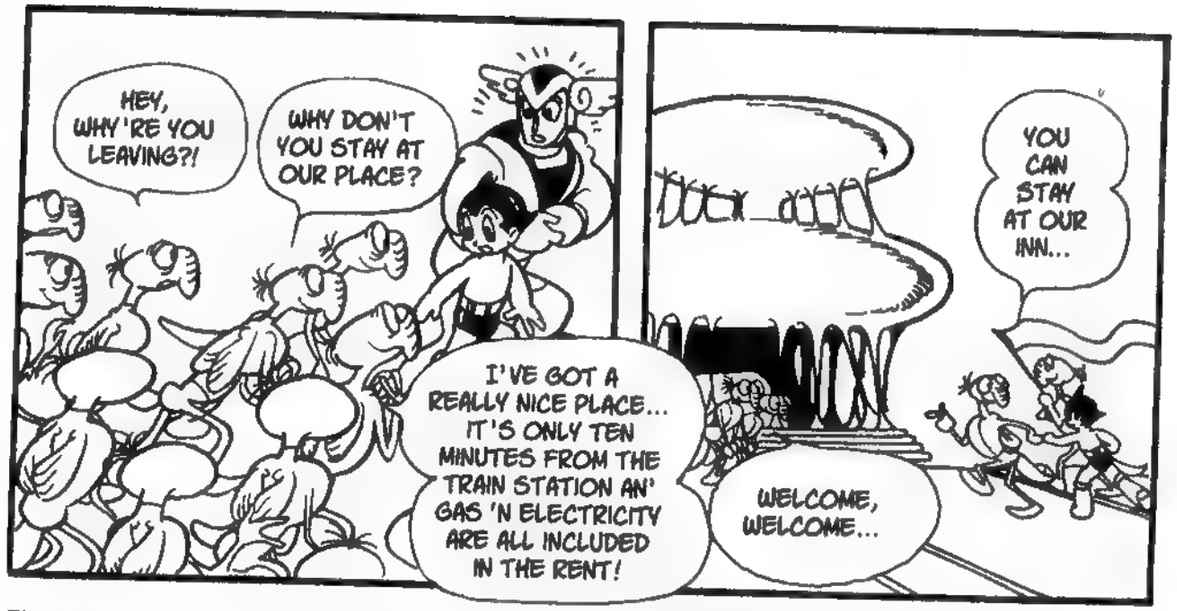


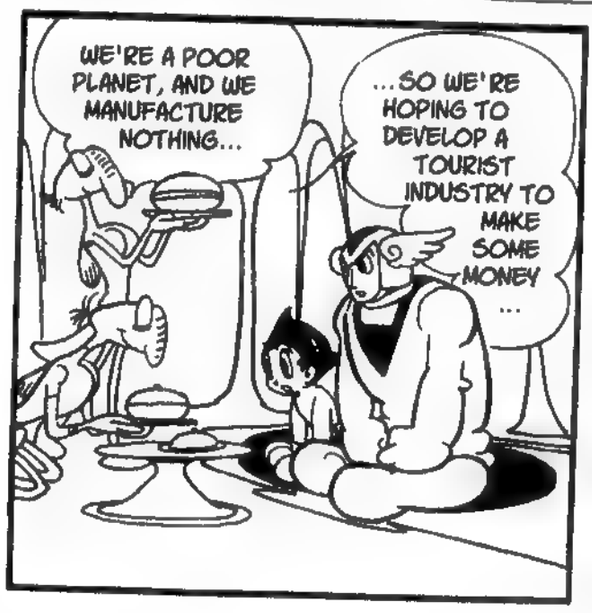
"WE'RE SPACE VIKINGS," THE MEN YELLED... "AND WHEN WE GET OUR HANDS ON THAT SUPER-POWERFUL BOMB, WE'RE GONNA RULE OVER EARTH! SO HAND IT OVER!"

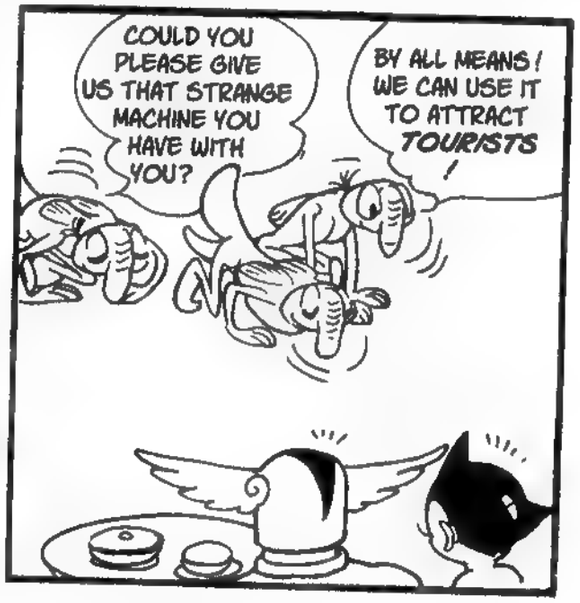
BUT THE ROBOTS WERE NOT ABOUT TO GIVE THE BOMB TO PIRATES. WITH A CRY TO ATTACK, THE PIRATES BEGAN FIRING THEIR RAY-GUNS, AND A FIERCE BATTLE ERUPTED. ASTRO AND THE OTHER TW ROBOTS LOADED THE BOM BACK ON THE SPACE CARG SHIP AND TOOK OFF FOR THE FAR REACHES OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

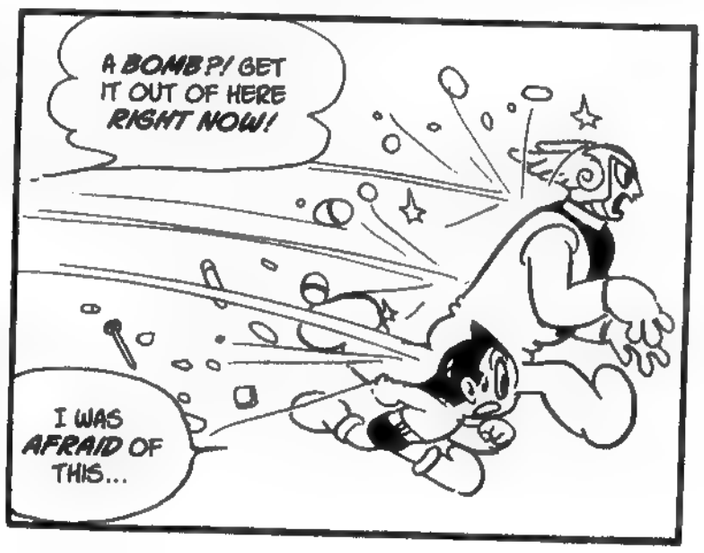





HEY, WHY'RE YOU LEAVING?!
WHY DON'T YOU STAY AT OUR PLACE?
I'VE GOT A REALLY NICE PLACE... IT'S ONLY TEN MINUTES FROM THE TRAIN STATION AN' GAS 'N ELECTRICITY ARE ALL INCLUDED IN THE RENT!
YOU CAN STAY AT OUR INN...
WELCOME, WELCOME...

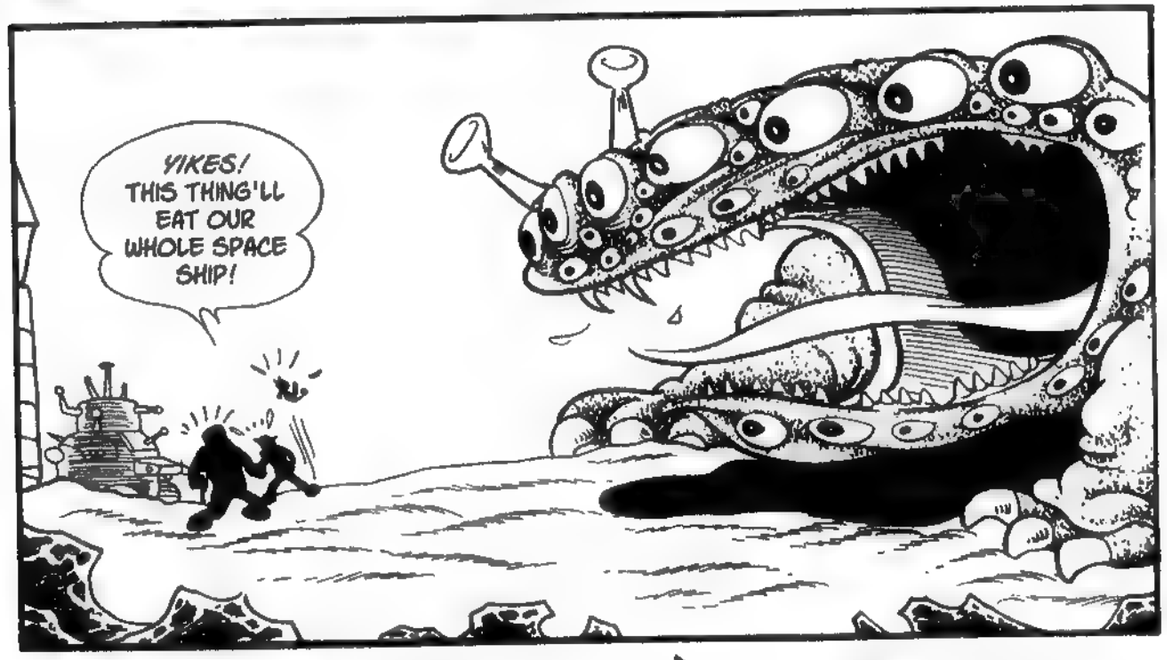




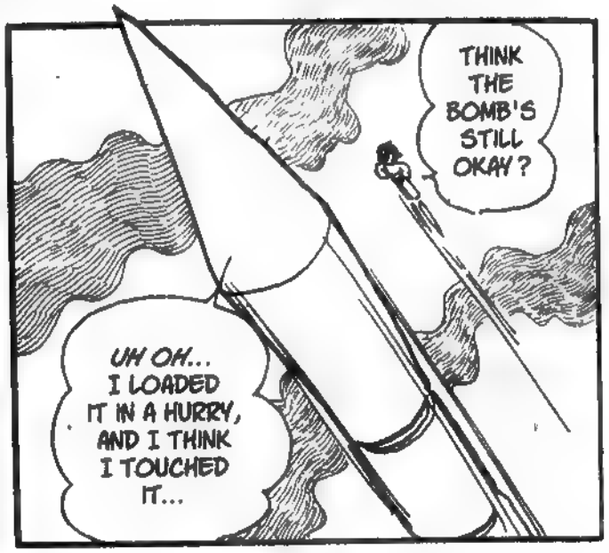


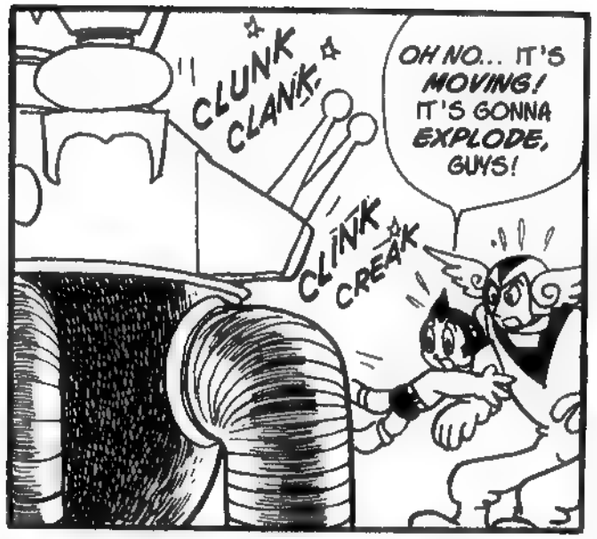
WHEW...
LET'S HEAD FOR THAT PLANET THERE!

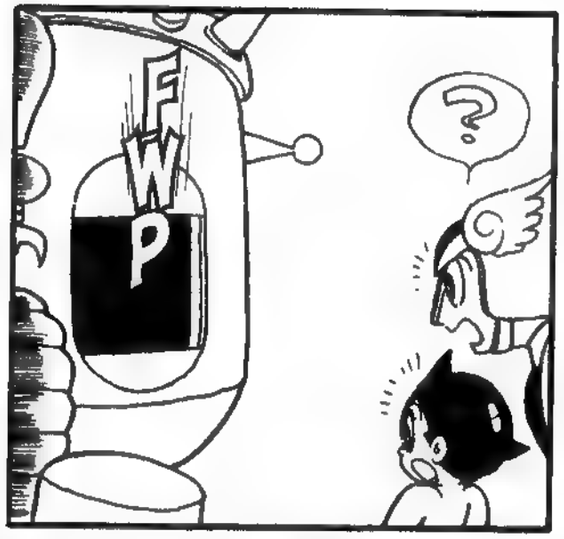
UH OH... GIANT FOOT-PRINTS!

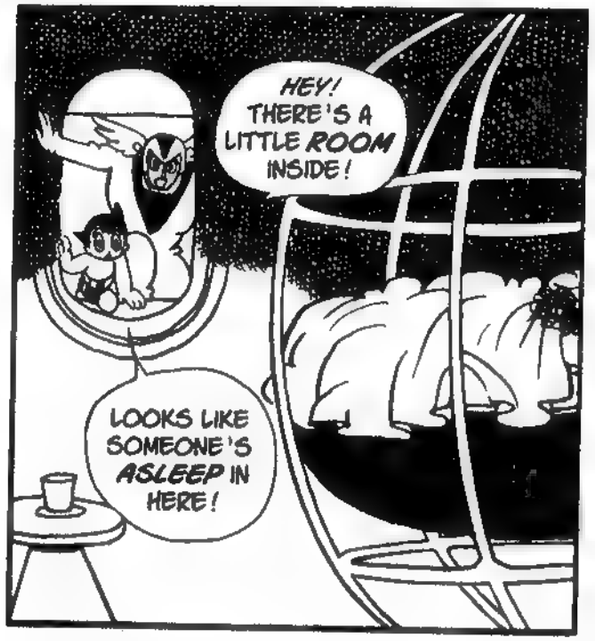

YIKES! THIS THING'LL EAT OUR WHOLE SPACE SHIP!

I'LL SMASH HIS TEETH TO GIVE US TIME TO MAKE A GETAWAY!


THINK THE BOMB'S STILL OKAY?
UH OH... I LOADED IT IN A HURRY, AND I THINK I TOUCHED IT...


CLUNK
CLANK
CLINK
CREAK
OH NO... IT'S MOVING! IT'S GONNA EXPLODE, GUYS!


FWP
?


HEY! THERE'S A LITTLE ROOM INSIDE!
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S ASLEEP IN HERE!

HEY! WHO WOKE ME UP?! I'M DR. KRAYZ, AND I DON'T LIKE BEING WOKEN UP!

SOME VISITORS OF MINE OVER THE NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY WERE SO NOISY THAT I DECIDED TO BUILD THIS THING TO SLEEP IN!
I FIGURED IF I TOLD EVERYONE IT WAS A BOMB, NOBODY'D DISTURB ME!!

SHOWDOWN IN THE STANDARD DEVIATION KINGDOM

First appeared in the February 27, 1976 issue of *Asahi* magazine.

ALL ROBOTS WITH A SCORE OF LESS THAN FORTY-FIVE ON THE **STANDARD DEVIATION TEST** ARE DEEMED HARMFUL. THEY MUST BE **DESTROYED!**

ALL HUMANS WITH A SCORE UNDER FORTY ARE DEEMED INCOMPETENT. THEY ARE SUBJECT TO **COMPULSORY EMIGRATION!**

2013 A.D.

GOSH, SO YOU'RE TAKING THE TEST, TOO?

YES... WHAT A HORRIBLE AGE THIS IS..

WOW... LOOK... THOSE 'RE ALL ROBOTS WHO SCORED UNDER FORTY-FIVE!

POOR THINGS... THEY'LL ALL BE **SCRAPPED...**

WELL, AT LEAST YOUR SON, ASTRO, WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM...

WELL, WE HOPE SO, BUT YOU NEVER KNOW...

DO YOUR BEST, ASTRO!

ALL ROBOT CHILDREN SCHEDULED TO TAKE THE EXAM, PLEASE ASSEMBLE...

I HAVE ONE ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE BEFORE THE EXAM STARTS, BOYS AND GIRLS...

IN ORDER TO CREATE A BETTER SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION, ALL HUMANS AND ROBOTS MUST TAKE THIS EXAM. THE ANSWERS WILL BE READ INTO A COMPUTER, THE STANDARD DEVIATION CALCULATED, AND ANY ROBOT WHO GETS UNDER FORTY-FIVE WILL LOSE ITS RIGHT TO EXIST.

...SO BE EXTREMELY **CAREFUL** IN THE ANSWERS YOU GIVE...

ANYONE CAUGHT CHEATING WILL IMMEDIATELY BE **EXECUTED!**

'COURSE, AS EVERYONE KNOWS, ROBOTS NEVER CHEAT ON EXAMS! HAR HAR...

CLACKETY CLACK CLACK

I OBEDIENCE TEST

*ROBOTS ARE ALWAYS REQUIRED TO OBEY HUMAN COMMANDS.

TRUE / FALSE

II LOYALTY TEST

*ROBOTS MUST ALWAYS BE LOYAL TO THE GOVERNMENT, CORPORATIONS, AND OFFICIALS.

TRUE / FALSE

UM, CAN I ASK A QUESTION ?

NO QUESTIONS DURING THE EXAM! WAIT 'TIL IT'S *OVER!*

GOSH, I NEVER EXPECTED THIS SORT OF PROBLEM...

'COURSE, I KNOW YOU ROBOTS'VE GOT RIDICULOUSLY *HIGH IQS*, AND THAT YOU'RE *MACHINES* CABABLE OF LEARNING *ANYTHING*...

THAT'S WHY IT'S USELESS GIVING YOU *REGULAR* TESTS!

THAT'S WHY THE PROBLEMS IN THIS TEST ARE *DIFFER-ENT!*

III APATHY TEST

*ROBOTS MUST REFRAIN FROM SHOWING ANY INTEREST IN ANY TYPE OF POLLUTION.

TRUE / FALSE

*ROBOTS MUST NEVER INTERFERE TH CORRUPTION, BRIBERY, OR THEFT ON THE PART OF OFFICIALS.

TRUE / FALSE

GOSH, THESE'RE *AWFUL* PROBLEMS...

I'M GONNA MARK *FALSE* NEXT TO *ALL* OF 'EM!

HOW'D IT GO, ASTRO ?

GEE, IT WAS A REALLY *STUPID* TEST...

THE COMPUTER WILL SHORTLY ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS OF THE LAST TEST...

NUMBER 26293 -- ASTRO BOY...

DAD! I ONLY GOT A *TWENTY* !!

20

I ONLY GOT TWENTY ON THE STANDARD DEVIATION TEST! THAT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO BE *SCRAPPED!*

B-BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, ASTRO!

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU? MUSTACHIO HERE...

LISTEN, WE'VE GOT AN EMERGENCY! THEY MIGHT *SCRAP ASTRO!*

WHAT?! ASTRO ONLY SCORED *TWENTY* ON THE EXAM?!

THERE MUST BE SOME KIND OF *MISTAKE!!*

WELL, A COMPUTER CALCULATED THE STANDARD DEVIATION, SO IT'S GOT TO BE RIGHT!

IT MEANS THAT ASTRO'S A *POOR PERFORMER!*

LISTEN HERE, YOU SCOUNDREL! SCRAP ASTRO, AND YOU'LL *REGRET* IT! MARK MY WORDS!

PLEASE, KIND SIR... LET HIM TAKE THE TEST ONE MORE TIME...

NO MATTER HOW MANY TESTS YOU TAKE, YER *DOOMED!*

THERE YA GO, ROBOTS!

IN OTHER WORDS, I'VE *FAILED* AS A *TEACHER!*

ALL MY EFFORTS'VE BEEN FOR *NOTHING!* ;SOB<

GOSH, TEACHER, DON'T CRY... IT'S *MY* FAULT, NOT *YOURS!*

NO, ASTRO! *YOU'VE* FAILED BECAUSE *I'VE* FAILED AS A TEACHER!

BUT THERE'S NO TIME TO CRY OVER SPILT MILK NOW! YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE *SCRAPPED,* ASTRO!

GOSH, THE MAGNETISM IN THE WALLS NOT ONLY PARALYZED ME, IT'S MAKING ME *DIZZY,* TOO!

HAALP! I'M *SCARED!*

HALP! I DON'T WANNA *DIE!!*

MA-MAAA!

THE TEST YOU TOOK WAS *CRAZY!* IT WAS *FLAWED!*

IT WAS A *TRICK!* A *TRAP* TO GET YOU, ASTRO!

B-BUT THE COMPUTER SAID HE GOT TWENTY...

;HMPH<... THE PROBLEM'S WITH THE QUESTIONS! THE TEST'S A GIMMICK! TO MAKE ROBOTS *MORE SUBSERVIENT* TO HUMANS!

WELL, THAT'S THAT. NOW THE USELESS ROBOTS'LL BE TAKEN APART...

THEY'LL BE REBUILT, GIVEN NEW IDENTITIES, AND THEY'LL EVENTUALLY SERVE HUMANS AGAIN...

JUST LET 'EM TRY TO TAKE YOU AWAY, ASTRO! I'LL *SKIN 'EM ALIVE!*

SKIN 'EM AND *THEN* WHAT, MISTER?!

OKAY, ALL YOU USELESS ROBOTS WHO ONLY SCORED TWENTY! COME ALONG WITH ME!

YIKES! I CAN'T *MOVE!!*

WHA?! THE ELECTRO MAGNETIC FIELD'S DISAPPEARED!

WE'RE GONNA LET YOU GO... YOU CAN GET DOWN NOW...

GOSH, MISTER... HOW COME YOU *SAVED* ME!?

WE FELT *COMPASSION* FOR YOU! NOW, MAKE A CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE!

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU!!

I HAD TO SEND A LITTLE MONEY TO *GREASE THE WHEELS*, ASTRO... IN OTHER WORDS, I *BRIBED* 'EM...

YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF A BRIBE? WELL, I HAD TO *GREASE THEIR PALMS*, THAT'S WHAT!

NOT FLEECING THEM FOR ALMS, *GREASING THEIR PALMS!* YOU'RE *INNOCENT*, ASTRO!

I KNOW ROBOTS PROB'LY DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS...

...BUT IN THE WORLD OF HUMANS, *MONEY TALKS!*

MONEY TALKS?!

ARGH!... FORGET IT, ASTRO... JUST GO HOME FROM THERE!

B-BUT I *CAN'T* GO HOME...

MY ELECTRO-BRAIN DETECTS SOMETHING *WRONG* WITH THIS PLACE...

I'VE GOTTA GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT!

DON'T ASTRO, DON'T...

I'VE JUST PAID A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY...

WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO RISK EVERYTHING NOW?!

PROFESSOR, I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHO'S BEHIND ALL THESE CRAZY STANDARD DEVIATION TESTS!

AND IF I FIND OUT, I MAY HAVE TO FIGHT HIM!

ASTRO! YOUR SENSE OF JUSTICE IS A *GOOD THING*, BUT NOW YOU'RE GOING *TOO FAR!!!*

WE'VE GOT A ROBOT WHO SCORED ONLY TWENTY ON THE LOOSE!

DON'T LET HIM INTO THE *SACRED ZONE!* SHOOT HIM DOWN BEFORE HE GETS IN!

I KNEW WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HIM OFF THE HOOK!

I *WARNED* YOU GUYS THIS'D HAPPEN!

WHAT THE--?!

WONDER WHERE THIS LEADS TO?

THIS IS REALLY CREEPY... 'MUST BE THE "SACRED ZONE" THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT...

WHO GOES THERE?!

UNAUTHORIZED PEOPLE ARE NOT ALLOWED HERE!

ZAAP

YOU MATH MONSTER! YOU'RE JUST MAKING EVERY-ONE *MISER-ABLE!!*

ZAP

WOW... IT'S A HUGE COM-PUTER ...!!

DO NOT COME ANY CLOSER ...

HAVE YOU NO FEAR, INSOLENT LITTLE ROBOT?

HEY, I'M NOT SCARED OF YOU! YOU'VE GOT AN ELECTRO-BRAIN, JUST LIKE ME!!

I'LL RUN OUT OF ENERGY UNLESS I TRY SOMETHING ELSE... I'D BETTER FIGURE OUT A WAY TO SMASH HIM...

I KNOW ...

OKAY, TELL YOU WHAT! I'LL GIVE *YOU* A TEST! IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER, YOU'RE *USELESS!* OKAY?!

.....
.....

QUESTION ONE: HOW DOES MONEY TALK?!

SILENCE! I AM THE SACRED ONE! WATCH YOUR *LAN-GUAGE!*

THE NUMBERS I GENERATE CON-TROL THE DESTINIES OF BOTH HUMANS AND ROBOTS!

MY NUMBERS DETERMINE ADVANCEMENT IN SCHOOL, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, MARRIAGES, LOVE, AND EVEN BUSINESS DEALINGS!

BZZZT

QUESTION TWO: WHAT'S *GREASING A PERSON'S PALM* MEAN? I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT FLEECING ALMS, EITHER!

WELL? BET YOU DON'T KNOW! ONLY HUMANS KNOW THAT!

WELL?

SEE? YOU'D SCORE AT THE *BOTTOM* OF A *STANDARD TEST!*

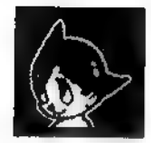
BUT YOU CAN'T DETERMINE THE WORTH OF A HUMAN OR A ROBOT WITH *NUMBERS !!*

SILENCE!!

CRUMBLE...

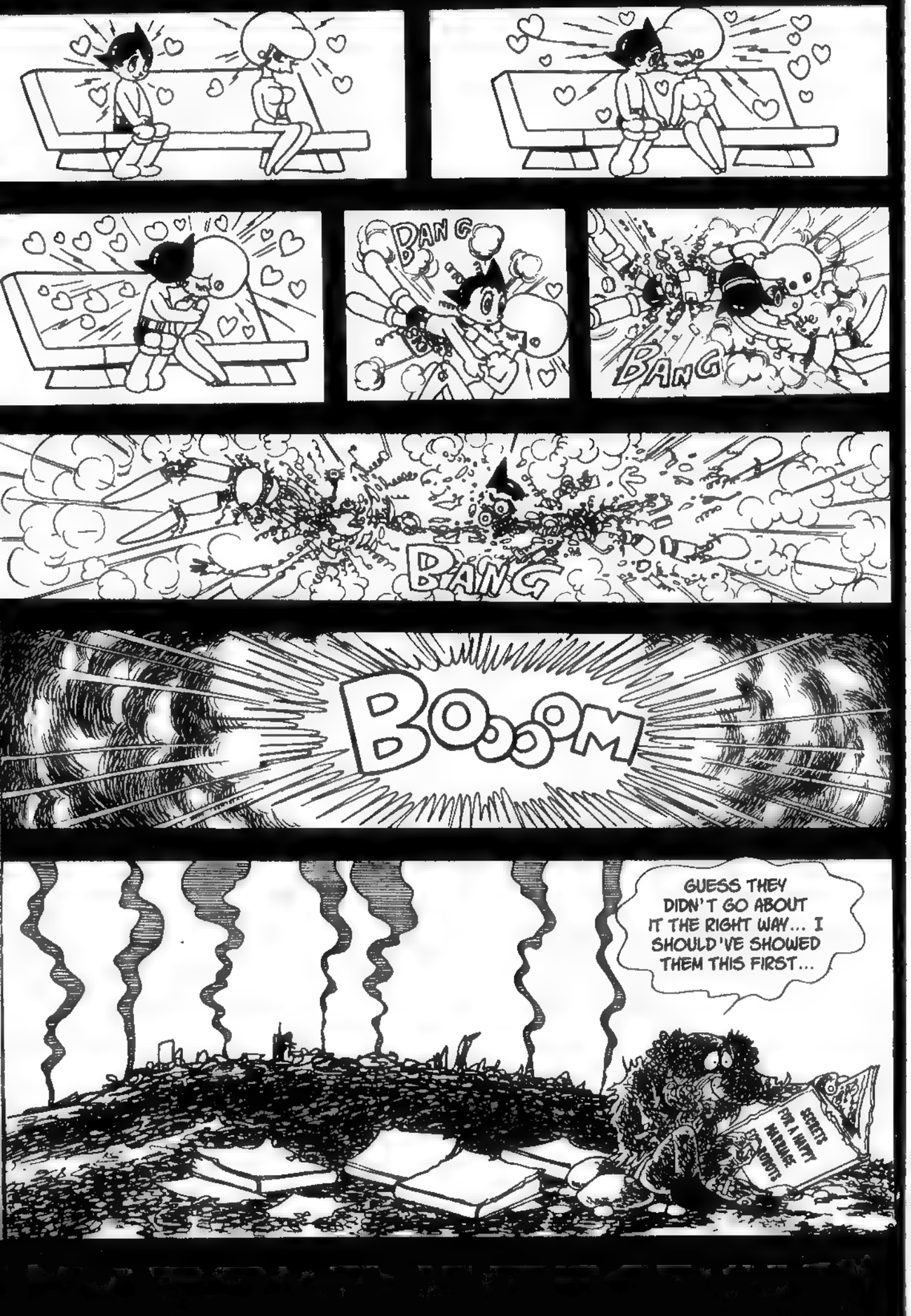
SO HOW COME THIS THING COLLAPSED ALL ON ITS OWN, ASTRO?

IT GOT *DEPRESSED* AND COMMITTED *SUICIDE,* TEACHER...



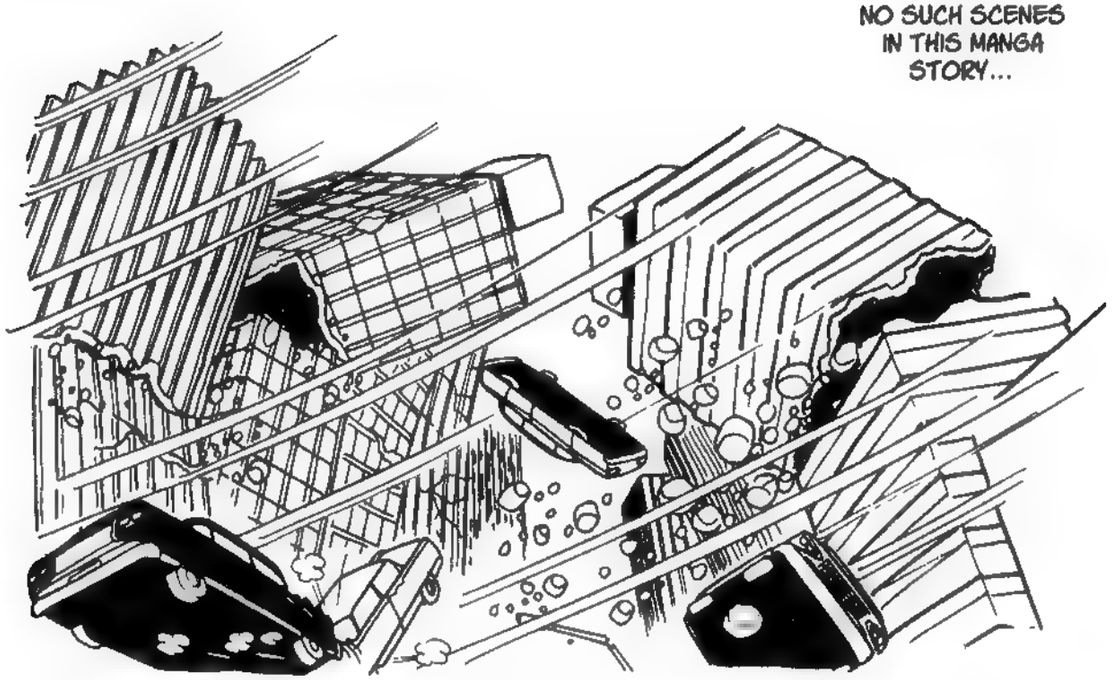
ASTRO'S FIRST LOVE

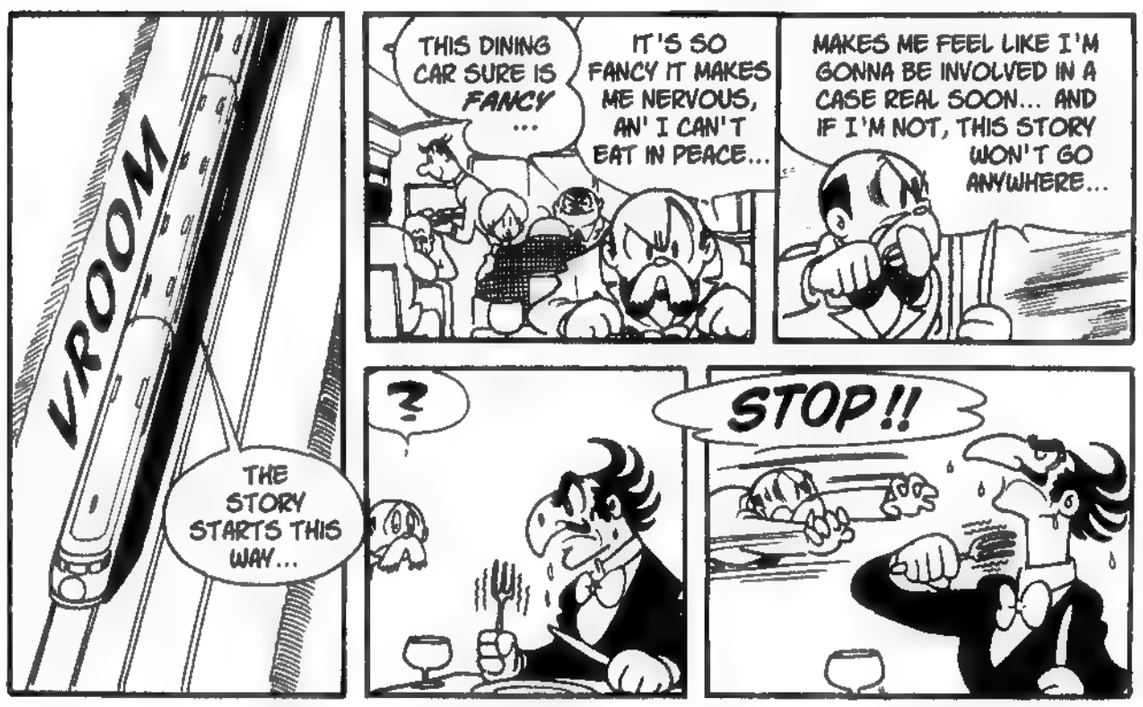
First appeared in the March 1969 issue of *Big Comic* magazine.


BANG
BANG
BANG
BOOOOM
GUESS THEY DIDN'T GO ABOUT IT THE RIGHT WAY... I SHOULD'VE SHOWED THEM THIS FIRST...
SECRETS FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE

SLIPPERY CATFISH IN IMMINENT DANGER

First appeared in the January 3, 1965 issue of *Sunday Mainichi* magazine.


DON'T WORRY... NO SUCH SCENES IN THIS MANGA STORY...


VROOM
THE STORY STARTS THIS WAY...
THIS DINING CAR SURE IS FANCY ...
IT'S SO FANCY IT MAKES ME NERVOUS, AN' I CAN'T EAT IN PEACE...
MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M GONNA BE INVOLVED IN A CASE REAL SOON... AND IF I'M NOT, THIS STORY WON'T GO ANYWHERE...
?
STOP!!

NOT SO FAST!
THIS MAN WAS TRYING TO KILL HIMSELF WITH A FORK, FOLKS!!
I WAS NOT! SOMEONE WAS TRYING TO KILL ME!!
DON'T BE STUPID! YOU WERE TRYING TO STAB YOURSELF IN THE THROAT!
I WAS NOT!
WHAT?! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
OWW! HE GOT ME!!
OWW! OWWW! OWW!... SOMEBODY GET HIM! HE MUST BE SOME KIND OF NUT!!
I'VE GOT HIM!!
UH OH... WE'RE IN TROUBLE...
WE'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF THIS...
I'LL USE A POISON DART DESIGNED TO LOOK LIKE A CIGARETTE ...
LET ME GO! PLEASE!
NO, MISTER, NO!!
'SCUSE ME... ANYONE GOT A MATCH?
FWP
YIKES! THAT POISON DART BOUNCED BACK!
WHO IS THIS KID, ANYWAY?
SHWIP

BIG X, THE MESSENGER OF JUSTICE, AT YOUR SERVICE!

HAALP! RUN FOR IT!!

THIS IS WHY I HATE APPEARING IN CRAZY MANGA!

LATER, AT THE POLICE STATION...

I'M TANGO HYOUNO, A PHYSICIST...

...AND SOMEONE'S TRYING TO KILL ME!

WHO?

THAT I CAN'T TELL YOU...

WELL, FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD, YOU WERE TRYING TO COMMIT SUICIDE!

THAT'S NOT TRUE! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?

I'VE GOT AN ARTIFICIAL ARM, AND IT KEPT TRYING TO STAB ME!!

AN ARTIFICIAL ARM?

RIGHT... MY LEGS ARE ARTIFICIAL...

AND SO'S MY TORSO...

WHA?!

EVERYTHING BELOW MY NECK'S ARTIFICIAL!

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT...

MY BODY'S THE RESULT OF A MAJOR OPERATION... BUT IT HAS IT'S ADVANTAGES... FOR EXAMPLE, I NEVER GET HUNGRY...

SO TO CONFIRM, YOU'RE SAYING YOUR OWN HAND TRIED TO STAB YOU?

SOMEONE'S BEEN CONTROLLING THIS HAND WITH SPECIAL RADIO WAVES AND TRYING TO KILL ME!

LEMME ARREST THE ARM, THEN!

EXACTLY...

WAIT! THE ARM'S CONNECTED TO THE VICTIM!

SO WHO'S REALLY BEHIND THIS?!

UNLESS YOU TELL US THAT, WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING!

BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU!!

THEN WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE YOU INTO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY...

.....

I NEED YOU TO KEEP WATCH OVER HIM, BIG X... I SUSPECT SOMETHING'LL HAPPEN AGAIN SOON...

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, THE MESSENGER OF JUSTICE!

UH OH...

MY LEGS'RE MOVING ON THEIR OWN!!

HAALP!

EGADS!!

KAVOMP

YOU OKAY?

MY LEGS JUST TRIED TO KILL ME!!

WAIT A SEC...!

YOU'VE GOTTA COUGH UP FOR THE REPAIRS TO MY TRUCK, PAL!

B-BUT I'M A CHAMPION OF JUSTICE!

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE, PAL! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!

THERE YA GO! NOW YOU'RE REALLY STANDING UP FOR JUSTICE!

WHA?! WHERE'S THE SCIENTIST I WAS GUARDING?

HE WAS TAKEN AWAY IN A CAR, MISTER...

TELL YA WHAT, I'LL CHASE HIM FOR YA... HOP IN...

HOLD ON! I'M GONNA STEP ON IT!

HEY! DON'T OVERDO IT!

WITH A CHAMPION OF JUSTICE IN MY TRUCK, WHO CARES ABOUT COP CARS?! HEH HEH...

UH OH... SOMETHING'S COMING THIS WAY!

YIKES!

WHO'RE YOU?!

LISTEN, MISTER...

...STOP CHASING THAT CAR UP AHEAD!

IF YOU DON'T, YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE ME ON!

WHAT?!

HOW DARE YOU INTERFERE WITH A CHAMPION OF JUSTICE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM. *STEP* ON IT!

YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE!

KAVO MP

TIME TO COUGH UP AGAIN, MR. *CHAMPION OF JUSTICE!*

JUST WAIT, ROBO-BOY... WE'LL MEET AGAIN!

NOBODY'S AFTER YOU ANYMORE...

SORRY FOR THE IN-CONVENIENCE, DR. HYOUNO, BUT I WAS ASKED TO TAKE YOU TO A CERTAIN PLACE...

HEH HEH...

THAT'S THE HOUSE RIGHT THERE, TEACHER! WE'RE HERE...

C'MON IN, SIR... THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU...

WELCOME, DR. HYOUNO... WE'VE GOT SOMEONE HERE WHO WANTS TO SEE YOU...

SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO MEET ME?!

RIGHT! SOMEONE WHO KNOWS YOU *VERY WELL!*

IT... IT'S THE MAN WHO TRIED TO *KILL* ME!!

SOMEONE CLOSER TO YOU THAN A FAMILY MEMBER...

NO!

AND IT'S ALSO THE PERSON *YOU* TRIED TO KILL, RIGHT?! WELL?!

YOU INVENTED SOMETHING EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, DR. HYOUNO... AND YOU WERE SO CONCERNED ABOUT KEEPING IT A SECRET THAT YOU REFUSED TO HIRE ANY ASSISTANTS!

"BUT IT WAS MORE THAN YOU COULD MANAGE ON YOUR OWN..."

"SO YOU CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF *DIVIDING YOURSELF IN TWO...*"

"USING EXTREMELY ADVANCED CYBORG SURGERY, YOU WERE ABLE TO SPLIT YOURSELF INTO TWO..."

"... INTO ONE PERSON WITH A *ROBOT HEAD* AND A *HUMAN BODY*, AND ANOTHER WITH A *ROBOT BODY* AND A *HUMAN HEAD*..."

AND UP TO THIS POINT, EVERYTHING WORKED *FINE*...

"BUT UNFORTUNATELY, YOU HAD A *FIANCEE*..."

"...SO THE TWO OF YOU FOUGHT OVER HER..."

"AND EVER SINCE THEN, THE TWO OF YOU..."

"... HAVE BEEN *SWORN ENEMIES* ..."

"THE ROBOT-HEAD VERSION OF YOU EMITTED SPECIAL WAVES TO CONTROL THE ROBOT BODY OF YOUR OTHER SELF..."

"IT TRIED TO STRANGLE YOUR HUMAN HEAD ..."

"FOR ITS PART, THE HUMAN HEAD VERSION OF YOU USED SPECIAL PSYCHIC POWERS..."

"... AND TRIED TO SMASH THE ROBOT-HEAD VERSION OF YOU..."

"YOU WERE TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER, WITHOUT REALLY BEING AWARE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING!"

SO YOU SEE, YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE SPLIT INTO TWO! IT'S TIME TO MAKE UP TO EACH OTHER, DRS. HYOUNO!

.....

GOOD! NOW, LET'S PUT YOU BACK TOGETHER, IN *ONE* BODY...

PROFESSOR... SOME WEIRD CHARACTERS ARE OUTSIDE...

THIS IS MORE THAN I CAN DEAL WITH, ASTRO! HELP ME!

BE CAREFUL!

WHAT THE --?!

IT'S A *GIANT ROBOT!* WHAT'S GOING ON?!

DR. HYOUNO'S INVENTION'LL BE A BIG HIT AROUND THE WORLD, SO HAND HIM OVER... *NOW!*

"HAND HIM OVER"?! WHO THE HECK DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!

WE'RE FROM *SPECTOR*, AN INTERNATIONAL SPY SOCIETY, THAT'S WHAT!

BLAST IT... I DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF INVENTION YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT YOU *CAN'T HAVE IT!!*

ASTRO! HELP!

URAN!!

HA HA! STAY OUT OF THIS, ASTRO BOY, UNLESS YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR SISTER *CRUSHED!*

HELP, ASTRO, *HELP!!*

HMPH! IF YOU WANT TO STEAL AN INVENTION... YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT OVER MY DEAD BODY!

Y...YOU COWARDS!

YIKES! THEY'RE NOT KIDDING!

GOTTA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BIG GUY HERE...

HEY, IT'S A *MANGA*, GUYS! NO NEED TO GET SO *SERIOUS!*

B-BUT...

WHEN IT COMES TO THIS, I'LL GIVE YOU A TASTE OF ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS...

TAKE *THIS!*

GOSH! WHAT'D YOU THROW, TEACHER?!

IT'S A SPECIAL ONE THOUSAND YEN *OLYMPIC COIN!*

GO GET HIM, ASTRO!

THIS IS WHERE THE ASTRO BOY THEME SONG SHOULD START PLAYING!

TAKE THIS!

UH OH...

HERE YOU GO!

KACHUNK

YIKES!

WHISK WHISK

UH OH... THERE'S ONE *MORE*...

YOU'RE THE GUY WHO WAS IN THE TRUCK, AREN'T YOU...

INDEED I AM... AND I'VE COME BACK TO *CHALLENGE* YOU!

WELL, YOU'RE ON, THEN!

YOU MAY BE THE CHAMPION OF JUSTICE, BUT I'LL SHOW YOU WHO *ASTRO BOY* IS!

I'M *BIG X*, THE MESSENGER OF JUSTICE!!

GOT ME...

I GIVE UP! YOU'RE STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT!

LET'S BE FRIENDS, INSTEAD...

YEAH, WE'RE *BOTH* CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE, AFTER ALL!

YOU'RE RIGHT! WE SHOULD WORK *TO-GETHER!*

YEAH, 'CAUSE IT'S HARD BEING A CHAMPION OF JUSTICE...

HEY, GUYS! DR. HYOUNO'S INVENTION'S FINISHED!

HE CALLS IT A "CHAMPION OF JUSTICE" MANUFACTURING MACHINE...

WHA ?!

THING JUST CRANKS OUT CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE... MAKES ME FEEL KINDA *CHEAP*...

ME, TOO...

ASTRO II

First appeared in the September 1975 issue of *Bungei Shunju Deluxe* magazine.

ASTRO...A LA SAINT-EXUPERY'S "LITTLE PRINCE"

IN THE YEAR 20XX, THE SUN BECAME EXTREMELY OVERACTIVE, AND PEOPLE ON EARTH FELL INTO AN UNPRECEDENTED PANIC...

IN ORDER TO SAVE EARTH, ASTRO HUGGED A SPECIAL DEVICE DESIGNED TO SUPPRESS SOLAR-NUCLEAR REACTIONS...

... AND PLUNGED TOWARDS THE SUN!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, ASTRO DID NOT RETURN...

AND THIS IS ALSO THE POINT WHERE THE ANIMATED TV SERIES ABOUT HIM ENDED...

AH... I'LL KEEP WAITING...

I'LL WAIT TILL YOU COME BACK, ASTRO, EVEN IF IT TAKES TEN YEARS, OR A HUNDRED...

I CAN'T STAND TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS, PROFESSOR! YOUR FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW'S LOOKING MORE AND MORE LIKE *MIDNIGHT*!

PERSONALLY, *I'VE* STOPPED THINKING ABOUT ASTRO...

PRO-FES-SOR ...

I'VE JUST DETECTED A STRANGE SIGNAL FROM OUTER SPACE... THE COORDINATES ARE Y-998-4881...

HEY! IT MIGHT BE *ASTRO!!*

LEMME CHECK!

NO! YOU DON'T EVEN WORK HERE!

THIS IS ASTRO BOY... THIS IS ASTRO BOY... COME IN, EARTH...

IT'S FROM *ASTRO!*

HE'S *ALIVE !!!*

"I WAS MELTED BY THE HEAT OF THE SUN, AND FOR A LONG TIME I MERELY DRIFTED IN SPACE... IF I HADN'T BEEN RESCUED, I WOULD'VE BECOME PERMANENT SPACE DEBRIS..."

"I DON'T KNOW WHO SAVED ME. IT MAY HAVE BEEN ALIENS. ALL I KNOW IS THAT THEY WERE GREAT TO ME... THEY WERE ABLE TO REPAIR ME ALMOST INSTANTLY ..."

IT... IT'S A *MIRACLE!*

THE PEOPLE WHO SAVED ME TOOK ME TO A SMALL PLANET...

"... WHERE I WAS TOLD TO LIVE FOR SOME TIME."

"IT WAS A TINY PLACE, AND IT ONLY HAD A FEW OTHER LIVING THINGS ON IT..."

I DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT PLANET WAS LOCATED ...

HELLO, EARTH..? EARTH? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

I MISS YOU, EARTH...

CAN'T WE TELL WHAT PLANET HE'S CALLING FROM?

WE'VE GOT OBSERVATORIES ALL OVER THE WORLD SEARCHING FOR IT RIGHT NOW, SIR, WITH NO SUCCESS...

POOR ASTRO ...

OCHANOMIZU? LISTEN, THIS IS THE PRIME MINISTER... WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO STOP FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF?

WHY DON'T YOU MAKE ANOTHER ASTRO BOY? IF YOU NEED TO, YOU CAN USE AS MUCH MONEY AS WE USED ON THE WORLD'S FAIR!

I GET IT... I'LL CREATE AN *ASTRO II!*

THE PREVIOUS ASTRO WASN'T PERFECT...

...SO WE WANT YOU TO MAKE *THIS* ONE PERFECT...

WE WANT YOU TO MAKE HIM NOT JUST *LIKE* A HUMAN, BUT A *HUMAN!*

UNDERSTOOD, GENTLEMEN!

WE'LL WORK OFF THE ORIGINAL BLUEPRINTS, BUT IMPROVE THE DESIGN EVEN MORE, MEN!

WE'LL MAKE HIM EVEN *MORE* DELUXE... EVEN *MORE HUMAN-LIKE...*

WHAT THE HECK'S THAT?

GENITALS ...

ARE YOU NUTS? WE DON'T NEED THAT...

WELL, IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE HIM *HUMAN*, HE'S GOT TO BE ABLE TO HAVE *SEX...*

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE *RIGHT...*

IT'S TIME TO BE BORN, ASTRO...

WAKE UP, ASTRO II.

WELL, I MUST SAY, YAWNING AND WASHING HIS FACE LIKE THAT *IS* AWFULLY HUMAN...

BUT HE LOOKS A LITTLE *SLOPPY,* DON'T YOU THINK?

HMM... I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS DAWN-TO-DUSK TV WATCHING...

GIVE ME SOME MONEY, PROFESSOR, AND I'LL GO OUT AND LEARN ABOUT THE WORLD...

AGAIN ...?

I LOVE FAMOUS PEOPLE...

HOTEL

WHAT THE--P! YOU'RE A ROBOT!!

CASANOVA WITH SEVEN SPECIAL POWERS!

YOU'RE OUT OF CONTROL, ASTRO...

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO EDUCATE YOU...

LOOK AT THOSE STUDENT RADICALS GOING AT IT! YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THEM, ASTRO!

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

IT'D BE STUPID TO GET INVOLVED IN THAT, PROFESSOR...

LISTEN, ASTRO! ROBOTS'RE SUPPOSED TO HELP PEOPLE!

GO, ASTRO! SAVE THAT POOR WOMAN!

AIEEE!

KRUSHED

WHEEE WHEEE

ASTRO! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAVE HER?!

OWW!

DON'T YOU FEEL ANY COMPASSION FOR HUMANS, ASTRO?

NOT PARTICULARLY...

YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN THOSE USELESS GAWKERS, ASTRO!

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE ASTRO I KNEW, THE CHAMPION OF JUSTICE!

"CHAMPION OF JUSTICE"? GOSH, PROFESSOR, THAT'S KINDA OLD FASHIONED NOW...

"OLD FASHIONED" P!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING OLD-FASHIONED?!

WHAT'S THIS? YOU SAY HE'S JUST LIKE OTHER HUMANS?

THAT'S JUST WHAT WE WANTED!

ACTUALLY, IT'S NOT SUCH A GOOD THING, MR. PRIME MINISTER...

IT'S TIME FOR YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT, ASTRO BOY...

SEE THOSE THINGS? THOSE'RE NEW ATOMIC WEAPONS THAT JAPAN DEVELOPED... WE WANT TO EXPORT THEM TO A CERTAIN COUNTRY, SO WE WANT YOU TO GUARD THEM CAREFULLY 'TIL THEY GET THERE...

THAT'S OKAY, BUT I NEED A MONTHLY SALARY OF 200,000 YEN!

YOU WHAT?!

AN' I'LL ALSO NEED AN ANNUAL BONUS OF 100,000,000 YEN, THREE DAYS OFF A WEEK, A GOOD WORKING ENVIRONMENT, AND A HOUSE TO LIVE IN... GOT IT?!

WHY'D YOU MAKE THIS PIECE OF JUNK ?!

BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT ORDERED ME TO, THAT'S WHY!

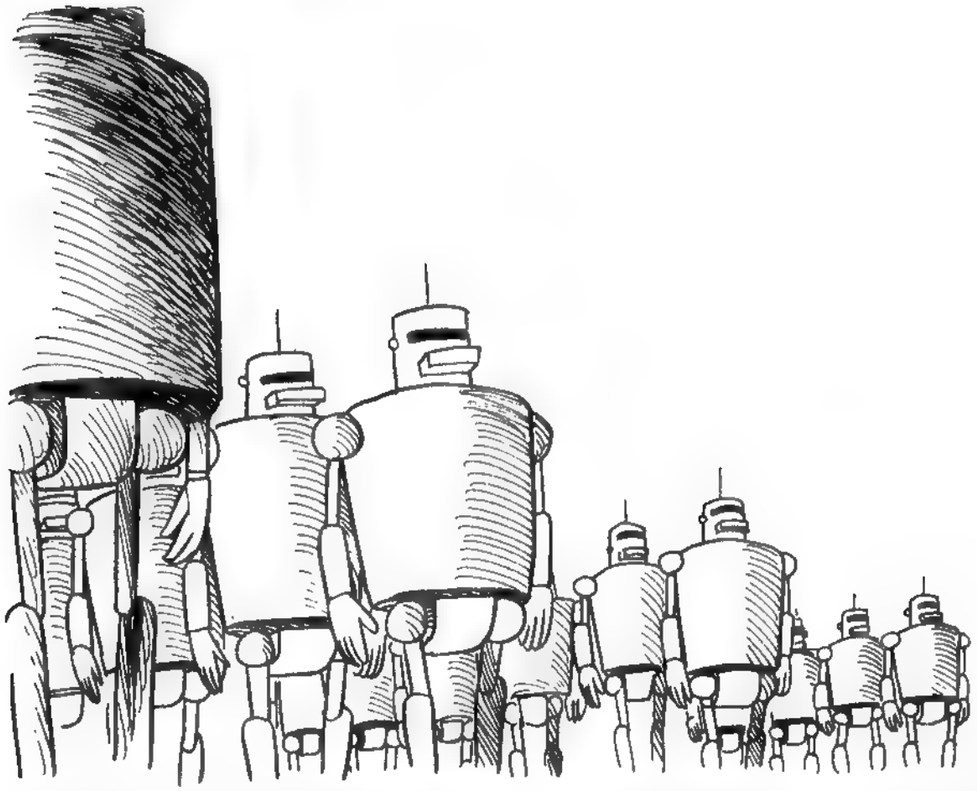
HEY! HE'S DEMANDING MONEY!

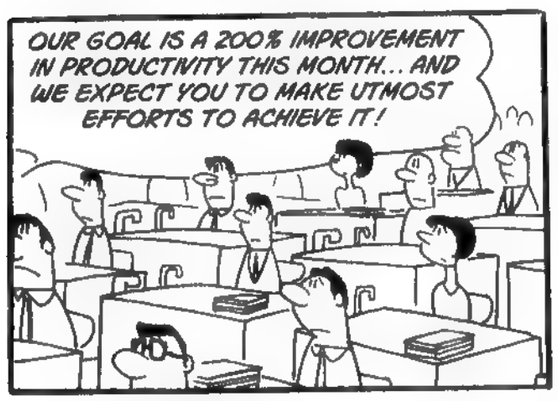
FAIR WAGES FOR WORK, THAT'S ALL...

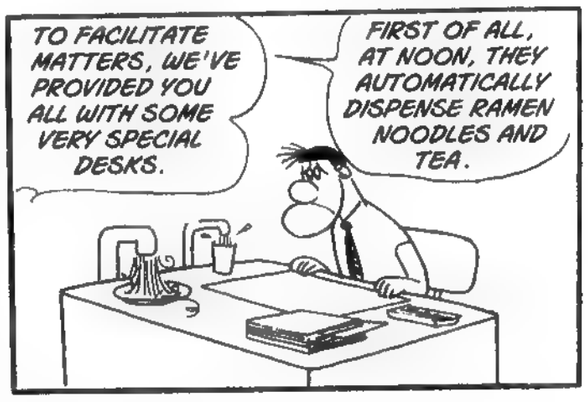
WELL, WE FINALLY GOT HIM TO GO ON THE ASSIGNMENT...
MR. PRIME MINISTER! NO CONTACT WITH ASTRO SINCE THE SHIP LEFT!!
WHAT ON EARTH IS HE DOING?!
HEY! THAT LOOKS LIKE ASTRO!
I SEE ASTRO OVER HERE, TOO!
AND THERE ... AND THERE, TOO!!
WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON?!
YOU S'POSE ASTRO'S ABLE TO REPRO-DUCE HIMSELF ?!
WE'VE BEEN NOTIFIED BY INTERPOL, SIR... ASTRO II SMASHED THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS SOMEWHERE AND INSTEAD STARTED A COMPANY TO MASS PRODUCE HIMSELF!
GRR... NOW I'M REALLY *REALLY* MAD!!
HE APPARENTLY INTENDS TO SELL CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE AT BARGAIN PRICES TO COUN-TRIES AROUND THE WORLD AND MAKE A *FORTUNE!*
ASTRO! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR *FRAUD!!*
IMAGINE... HE WAS LIVING LIKE A KING, WITH A HAREM OF ONE HUNDRED WOMEN!
STOP FIDGETING, ASTRO...! YOU'RE THE *CHAM-PION OF JUSTICE!*
MORE LIKE THE CHAMPION OF *JUST-PLAY-BOY,* IF YOU ASK US!
NOTHING WRONG WITH AN IMPERFECT AND INCOMPLETE ROBOT...
AH, ASTRO... THERE'S ONLY ONE REAL YOU... PLEASE COME BACK...

I AM KNOWALL

First appeared in the September 1964 issue of *Manga Dokuhon* magazine.

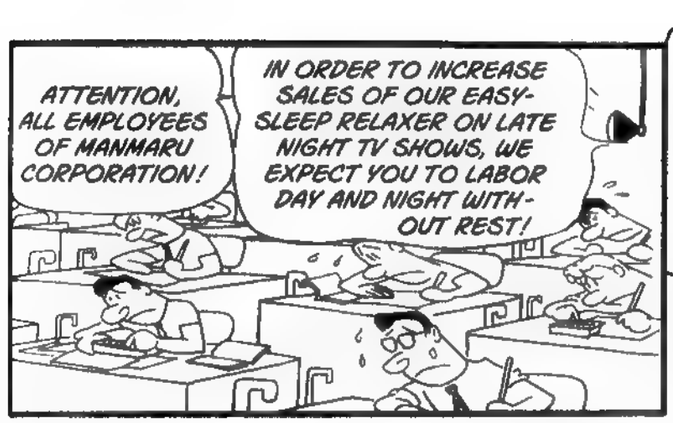



OUR GOAL IS A 200% IMPROVEMENT IN PRODUCTIVITY THIS MONTH... AND WE EXPECT YOU TO MAKE UTMOST EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE IT!

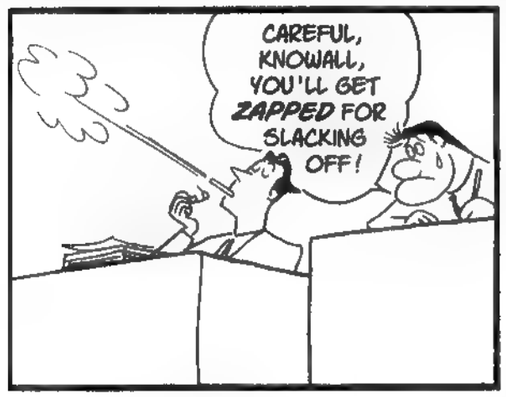

TO FACILITATE MATTERS, WE'VE PROVIDED YOU ALL WITH SOME VERY SPECIAL DESKS.
FIRST OF ALL, AT NOON, THEY AUTOMATICALLY DISPENSE RAMEN NOODLES AND TEA.

YOU WON'T HAVE TO WASTE ANY TIME GOING TO THE BATHROOM, EITHER...

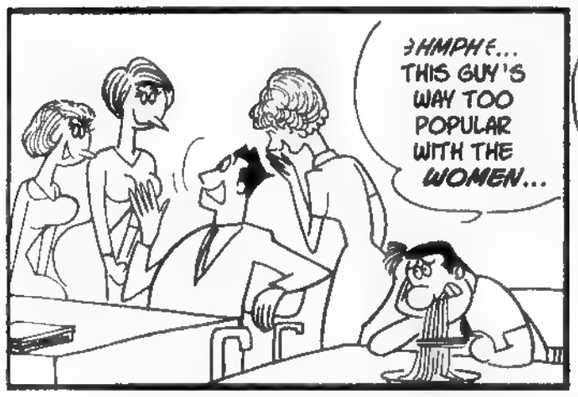
AND IF YOU START NODDING OFF, WE'LL GIVE YOU A LITTLE SHOCK...
ZAAP

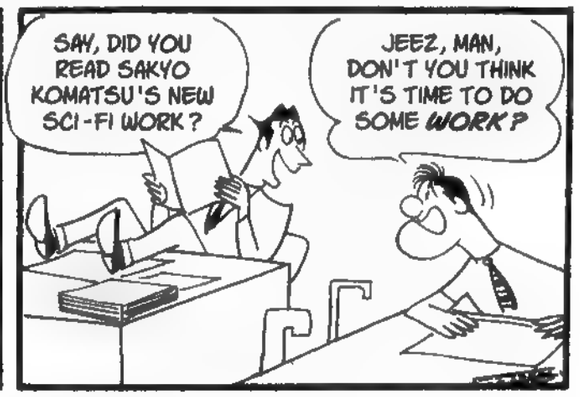

ATTENTION, ALL EMPLOYEES OF MANMARU CORPORATION!
IN ORDER TO INCREASE SALES OF OUR EASY-SLEEP RELAXER ON LATE NIGHT TV SHOWS, WE EXPECT YOU TO LABOR DAY AND NIGHT WITH-OUT REST!

DON'T BOTHER TO GET UP... I HAVE A NEW EMPLOYEE TO INTRO-DUCE...
HIS NAME'S "KNOW-ALL"...


CAREFUL, KNOWALL, YOU'LL GET ZAPPED FOR SLACKING OFF!

NO SWEAT, PAL... I FIGURED OUT THE DEAL WITH THESE DESKS AS SOON AS I SAT DOWN...
...SO I IMMEDIATELY CUT THE POWER CORD...


HMPH... THIS GUY'S WAY TOO POPULAR WITH THE WOMEN...


SAY, DID YOU READ SAKYO KOMATSU'S NEW SCI-FI WORK?
JEEZ, MAN, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME TO DO SOME WORK?

FINISH YOUR QUOTA ALREADY, KNOWALL?

LESSEE... HERE'S TODAY'S WORK... HERE'S TOMORROW'S... AND HERE'S NEXT WEEK'S...

IF YOU'D LIKE, I'LL DO YOUR WORK, TOO, BOSS... BY THE WAY, WHERE'S THE PARTY TONIGHT, ANYWAY?

HAVE WE MADE A DECISION WHETHER TO REPLACE THE EMPLOYEES WITH *ROBOTS* YET, BOSS?

WE'RE TESTING THE ROBOTS RIGHT NOW, AND IF THEY DO WELL ENOUGH, WE'LL USE 'EM...

I'M STILL NEW TO THE NIGHT-LIFE IN THIS AREA ...

DON'T WORRY, I'LL TAKE YOU TO MY FAVORITE BAR...

I NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT ME, KNOWALL... THEY JUST JUMPED ON ME...

YOU'D BETTER GET HOME RIGHT AWAY...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME...

I'LL BE GIVING THE GALS ENGLISH CONVERSATION AND DANCE LESSONS ...

WELL, WHAT A *FINE* MAN WE'VE GOT ON OUR HANDS TONIGHT!

HEY! WHAT ABOUT *ME?!*

"ENGLISH CONVERSATION"? "DANCE"? MY GOSH, WHAT'S HE GONNA TEACH 'EM AFTER THAT?!

I'M TELLING YOU, FELLOW WORKERS, MANAGEMENT'S PLANNING TO *REPLACE* US WITH *ROBOTS!*

ROBOTS ARE NOW A THREAT TO WORKERS LIKE *US!*

LABOR UNION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

WHAT A DRAG... I'M GOING *HOME*...

THAT GUY DISGUSTS ME...

HAAALP!

BAM

POW

I SAY WE MUSTN'T LET ROBOTS TAKE OVER THE WORKPLACE!

WE MUST CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE!

HOW COME YOU'RE WORKING SO HARD?

I'VE GOTTA MAKE THE BOSSES UNDERSTAND THAT HUMANS'RE SUPERIOR TO ROBOTS!

coffee

STUPIDEST THING I EVER HEARD OF...

WORKING OVERTIME AGAIN?

HE'S BEEN WORKING WITHOUT EATING ANY RAMEN OR DRINKING ANYTHING AT ALL...

THE IDIOT'S FAINTED!

CLINIC

HE'S APPARENTLY GOT ACUTE FATIGUE-INDUCED HEPATITIS ...

DEFINITELY A MISDIAGNOSIS... THIS IS CANCER!

WHAT THE ?!

TIME FOR SOME SURGERY ...

Y-YOU MUST BE *KIDDING!!*

HAALP! HAALP!

DON'T WORRY... I CAN DO THE DOCTOR THING, AND IF YOU DIE, I CAN BE YOUR *UNDERTAKER,* TOO...

HOW COME YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING SO WELL, KNOWALL?!

HEY, IT'S THE AGE WE LIVE IN. SINGERS WRITE NOVELS... NOVELISTS WORK AS ACTORS...

WAIT A MINUTE...

THERE'S SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT YOUR *EYES...*

I KNOW YOU USE THOSE EYES TO SEDUCE WOMEN...

...BUT THEY NEVER *BLINK* ...

...AND ALL HUMANS HAVE TO BLINK.

THUD

Y..YOU'RE A *ROBOT,* AREN'T YOU?!

IT'S TRUE... I *AM* A ROBOT, ASSIGNED TO THE COMPANY FOR *TEST PURPOSES...*

B-BUT ROBOTS'RE SUPPOSED TO WORK *HARD...* AND YOU'RE ALWAYS *SLACKING OFF...*

WELL, ACTUALLY, THEY PROGRAMMED ME TO HAVE THE PERSONALITY OF AN *AVERAGE* COMPANY EMPLOYEE...

S-SO YOU OUGHTA UNDERSTAND GUYS LIKE *ME,* THEN!

I'M GOING TO RECOMMEND YOU FOR THE LABOR UNION'S NEXT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, MR. KNOWALL!

YOU HAVE THE TOTAL SUPPORT OF ALL OF US FEMALE EMPLOYEES...

LEAVE IT UP TO ME, LADIES...

SIR... THE HEAD OF THE EMPLOYEES' LABOR COMMITTEE IS HERE...

HMPH! ...WON'T DO HIM ANY GOOD...

WHA?! WHAT'RE *YOU* DOING HERE?

I'M REPRESENTATING THE EMPLOYEES, SIR...

IDIOT! YOU'RE A *ROBOT,* MADE BY THE COMPANY!

BUT EMOTIONALLY, I IDENTIFY WITH THE EMPLOYEES...

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

GOSH, KNOWALL'S BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE BOSS FOR NEARLY THREE DAYS!

WE'LL BE COVERED WITH COBWEBS SOON!

THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH MANAGEMENT WERE A SUCCESS, FOLKS!

HOORAY!

FROM NOW ON, ONCE A DAY...

...ALL THE EMPLOYEES HAVE TO TEST THE PRODUCT THEMSELVES.

...TEST THE *EASY-SLEEP RELAXER*, THAT IS...

WHAT SORT OF BAUBLES WOULD YOU LIKE, MY DEAR? NECKLACES? RINGS?

WHAT THE --?! HE TOOK HER INSIDE THE *COMPANY WARE-HOUSE!!* THAT'S WHERE WE HAVE THE *EM-PLOYEE ROBOTS* STORED!

HEH HEH... IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU WANT HERE ...

...IT'S ALL *FREE!*

MAY I KISS YOU NOW?

KABOOOM

SOB... THE ROBOT WAREHOUSE *BLEW UP!*

KNOWALL WAS A TRUE HERO...

.HE'S NOTHING BUT A PAIN IN THE NECK FOR THE COMPANY...

BUT UNLIKE THE LAST HEAD OF THE LABOR COMMITTEE, AT LEAST HE WON'T HOOK UP WITH *YAKUZA* GANGS AND ROB US BLIND...

LET'S SIC THIS FEMALE SECRE-TARY ROBOT ON HIM...

SHE'S DESIGNED TO EXPLODE THE MOMENT HE KISSES HER... *HEH HEH...*

ЯМ-ИАМ

OUGHTA WORK LIKE A CHARM...

WHAT? HIS *BABY'S* BEEN BORN?

THEY'RE BEING BORN ALL OVER THE PLACE... I'M PREGNANT *MYSELF!*

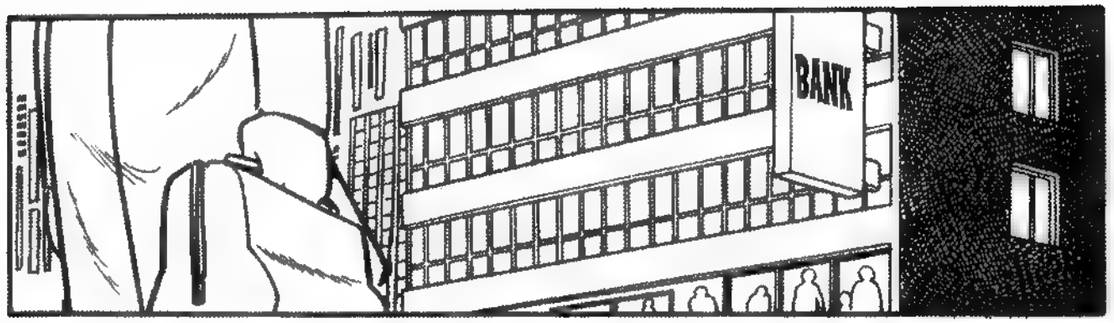
B-BUT THAT'S CRAZY! HE WAS A *ROBOT!*

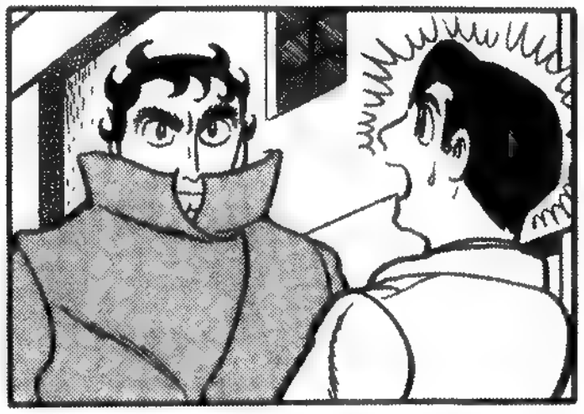
WHAT'S A ROBOT'S BABY LOOK LIKE ANYWAY?

I SHOULD'VE GUESSED...

YOU'RE GUILTY!

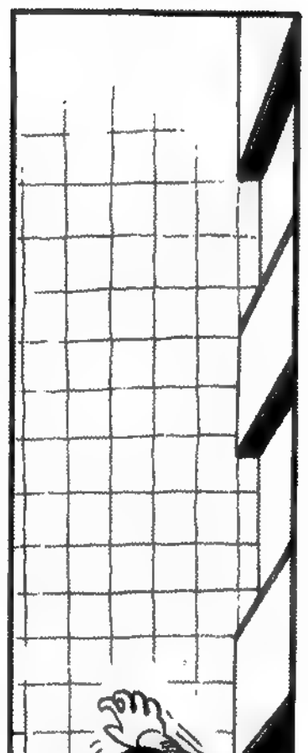
First appeared in the March 10, 1975 issue of *Shukan Shonen Champion* magazine.

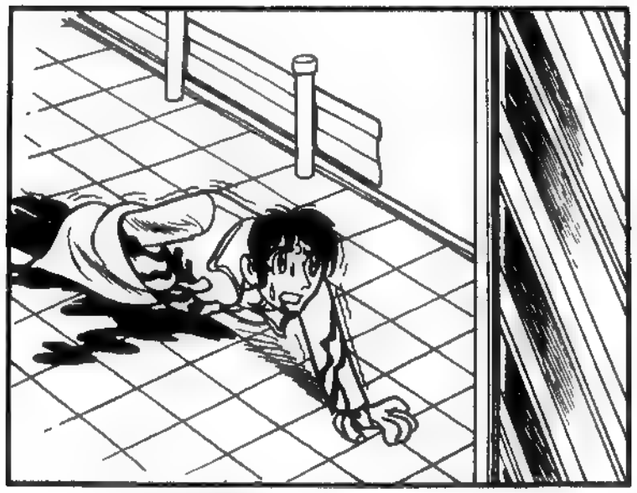

BANK

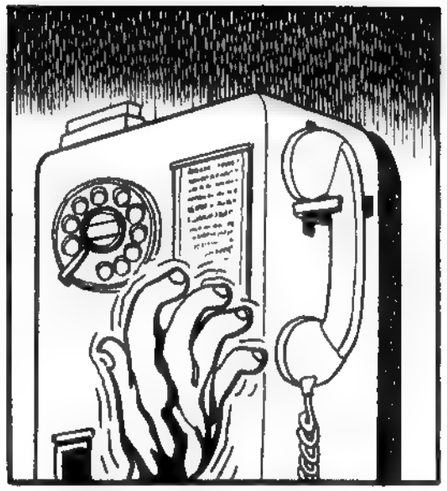


DROP IT RIGHT THERE... I KNOW YOU'VE GOT MONEY IN IT...
SHOONK
WH-WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? THIS IS THE EMPLOYEES' SALARIES!

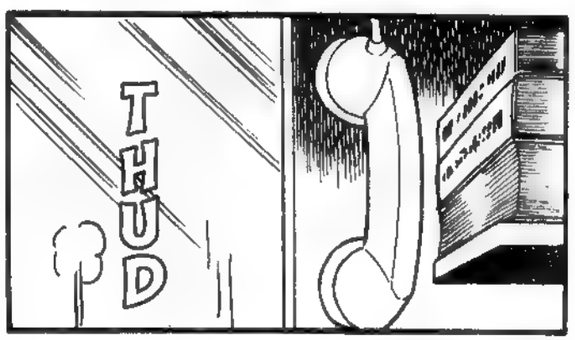
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK







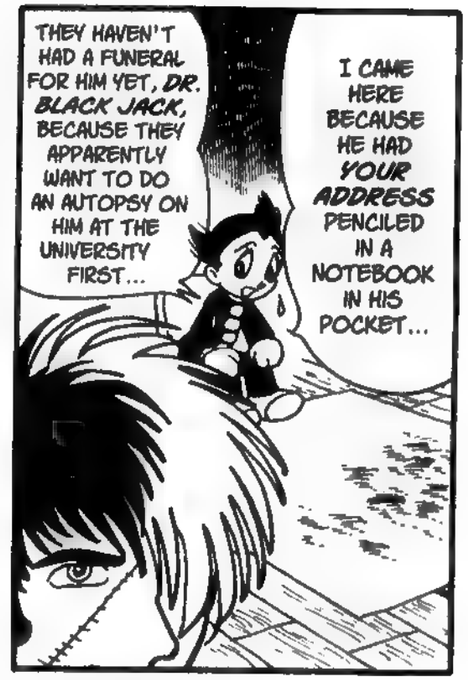
I'VE BEEN ROBBED! H-HELP ME!!


THUD

MY DEAR BROTHER!
HE'S IN CRITICAL CONDITION... AND THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO, SON...

WHO DID THIS TO MY BROTHER?! TELL ME! SOMEBODY TELL ME!!

SOB
...


THEY HAVEN'T HAD A FUNERAL FOR HIM YET, DR. BLACK JACK, BECAUSE THEY APPARENTLY WANT TO DO AN AUTOPSY ON HIM AT THE UNIVERSITY FIRST...
I CAME HERE BECAUSE HE HAD YOUR ADDRESS PENCILED IN A NOTEBOOK IN HIS POCKET...

BUT WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
I NEED TO GET REVENGE, DOCTOR! REVENGE!

REVENGE? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'VE GOT TO FIND WHOEVER DID IT! I KNOW HE WAS JUST WAITING FOR MY BROTHER TO COME OUT OF THAT BANK!
I'LL GO IN AND OUT OF THE BANK WITH A BAG IN MY HAND EVERY DAY UNTIL WHOEVER DID THIS DECIDES TO GO AFTER ME!

SO YOU'RE GOING TO DELIBERATELY HAVE THE ROBBER TARGET YOU...?
SOUNDS MIGHTY DANGEROUS FOR A YOUNG BOY...

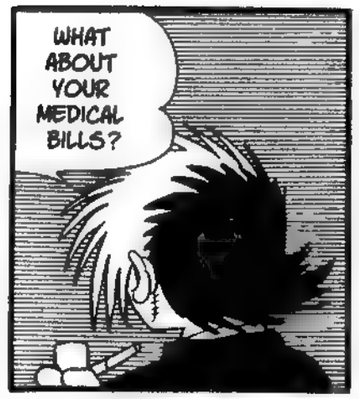
WELL, IF I REALLY RUN ACROSS HIM...
...I'LL FIGHT HIM WITH THIS *KNIFE* I ALWAYS CARRY.

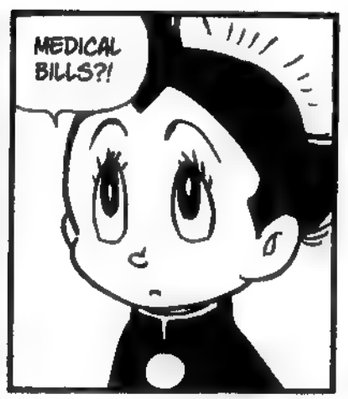
I'D FORGET ABOUT IT, IF I WERE YOU...
WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT *KIDS* FIGHTING HERE...
NO! I *HAVE* TO DO THIS!

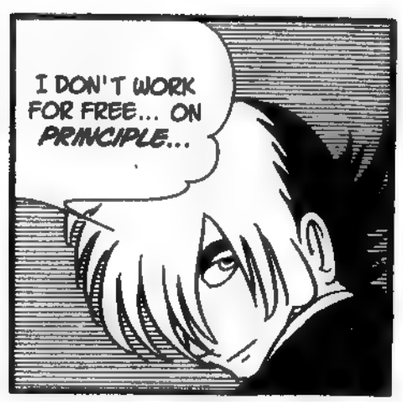
THE ROBBER *STABBED* MY BROTHER TO DEATH!
SO I'M GOING TO STAB HIM BACK! I'M GONNA DO TO HIM WHAT HE DID TO MY BROTHER!

FORGET IT... YOU'RE JUST A *KID*...
YOU MIGHT WIND UP BEING *STABBED YOURSELF* ...

WELL, IF I AM, YOU CAN FIX ME...
I'LL AT LEAST REMEMBER THE MAN'S *FACE*... I CAN BE A *WITNESS* FOR MY BROTHER...


WHAT ABOUT YOUR MEDICAL BILLS?

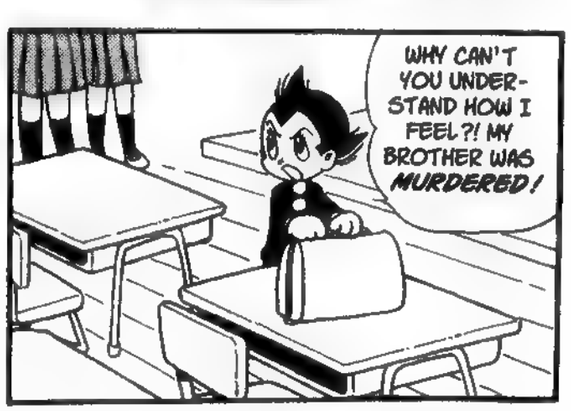

MEDICAL BILLS?!


I DON'T WORK FOR FREE... ON *PRINCIPLE*...

YOUR BROTHER MUST'VE HAD SOME LIFE INSURANCE...
MAYBE YOU COULD GIVE ME ALL OF THAT...

IF YOU'RE WOUNDED, FEEL FREE TO COME BY... *HAH HAH HAH*...

I'D FORGET IT... YOU MIGHT BE THE ONE WHO GETS DONE IN...
YEAH, YOU'RE NOT AS STRONG AS YOU THINK YOU ARE...
YOU ONLY GOT A *C* IN P.E., RIGHT?


WHY CAN'T YOU UNDER-STAND HOW I FEEL?! MY BROTHER WAS *MURDERED!*

I'LL FIND THE MAN WHO DID IT, IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO...
I DON'T CARE HOW MANY YEARS IT TAKES...

IT'S BEEN THREE MONTHS ALREADY...

CLACK CLACK

CLACK CLACK

CLACK CLACK

HEY, KID...

I KNOW YOU'VE GOT MONEY INSIDE THAT BAG... WELL, HAND IT OVER!

HAND IT OVER, OR PREPARE TO *DIE*...

WHY, YOU...

.....
.....
.....

SWISH

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!

ARGH!!

BLAST IT...

AARGGH...

EEK!! LOOK! SOMEONE'S COLLAPSED!

IT'S A YOUNG BOY!

YOU DID SOMETHING REALLY STUPID, KID...

BUT I'M GONNA BE OKAY, RIGHT?

YEAH, BUT WHY'D YOU DO IT TO YOURSELF?

WH-WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

SOMEONE STABBED ME!

I CAN TELL BY THE WOUND OPENING, SON... YOU STABBED YOURSELF!!

I KNOW YOU STABBED YOURSELF, BECAUSE YOU UNCONSCIOUSLY AVOIDED GOING DEEP AND AIMED FOR A PLACE THAT WOULDN'T KILL YOU...

BUT WHY, EH? WHY?

P-PLEASE DOCTOR... DON'T TELL ANYONE... PLEASE...

I...I FOUND THE GUY WHO KILLED MY BROTHER... AND THE INSTANT I SAW HIM, I THOUGHT HE WAS REALLY GOING TO KILL ME...

SO I STABBED MYSELF BEFORE HE COULD DO ANYTHING, BUT I TRIED TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE HE DID IT!!

PLEASE, DOCTOR... *PLEASE!*

DON'T TELL ANYONE I STABBED MYSELF, OKAY?

YOU'VE GOTTA TELL PEOPLE THAT MAN DID IT... NOT *ME!*

OTHERWISE, HE'LL GET OFF INNOCENT!

SO THIS WAS SOME WEIRD WAY OF GETTING REVENGE, WASN'T IT...?

I KNOW IT'S NOT RIGHT TO TELL A LIE...

...BUT IF YOU COULD JUST GO ALONG WITH ME ON THIS...

...THEN NO ONE'LL BELIEVE HIM, NO MATTER WHAT HE SAYS.

DON'T WORRY, KID... I THINK I GET IT...

ROBBERY SUSPECT ARRESTED

YOUNG BOY VICTIM IDENTIFIES CULPRIT

SUSPECT DENIES ALLEGATIONS!

YOU THINK I'D STAB A CHILD AND STEAL MONEY?! THAT'S *PREPOS-TEROUS!*

I SWEAR, WHEN I RAN INTO THE KID, HE JUST UP AND *STABBED HIMSELF!*

HE MUST'VE BEEN *CRAZY...*

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D CALL *ME* A ROBBER!

WELL? HE SAYS *YOU* STABBED YOURSELF, KID...

NO! HE DID IT! *HE* STABBED ME!

B-BUT THAT'S *RIDICULOUS!* I DIDN'T DO IT!

I JUST HAPPENED TO RUN INTO THE KID ON THE STREET!

BUT THE KID'S PRINTS AREN'T ON THE WEAPON, PAL...

THAT'S 'CUZ HE'S SMART... HE... HE WAS WEARING *GLOVES!!*

LISTEN, INSPECTOR... I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT THIS KID'S *ACTING!* HE'S TRYING TO *FRAME* ME!

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D DO THIS TO AN INNOCENT MAN!

WELL, WE'VE GOT A *PROBLEM*... THEIR STORIES ARE COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER...

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT 'N SEE WHAT THE DOCTOR SAYS...

HERE COMES THE DOCTOR!

THANKS FOR COMING, DOCTOR ...

BEFORE WE START, I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW, BUT...

...IN THIS DEPOSITION, YOU MUST TELL THE *TRUTH*...

IF YOU DON'T, YOU COULD BE GUILTY OF *PER-JURY!!*

.....
.....

YOU TREATED THIS BOY'S WOUND, DIDN'T YOU, SIR?

I DID, IN-DEED ...

NOW, IN YOUR PRO-FESSIONAL OPINION, WAS IT INFLICTED BY SOMEONE ELSE?

...OR WAS IT *SELF-INFLICT-ED?*

IT WAS SELF-INFLICTED BY THE BOY HIMSELF!

WHAT?!

SEE? WHAT'D I TELL YOU?!

THE WOUND WAS SHALLOW, BECAUSE THE KNIFE HAD NO FORCE BEHIND IT... I CHECKED THE DIRECTION OF THE WOUND, THE AMOUNT OF BLEEDING, AND OTHER FACTORS...

...I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE BOY STABBED HIMSELF.

YOU'RE SURE?

I AM...

Y-YOU TRAITOR!!!

THANKS, DOC... WE APPRECIATE IT...

N-NO!! IT'S NOT TRUE! I SWEAR... THIS MAN DID IT!!

YOU HEARD WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID, INSPECTOR... HOW 'BOUT LETTING ME GO NOW?

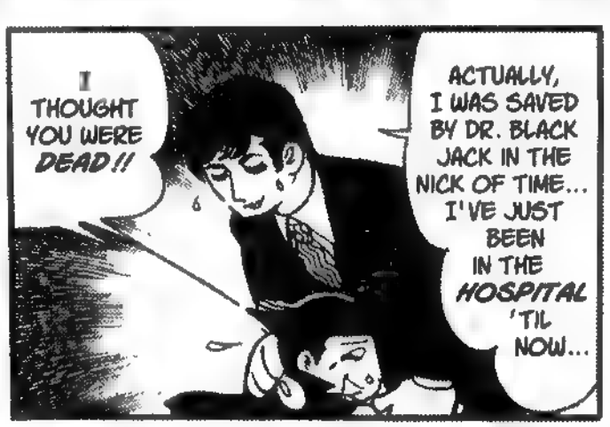
OKAY, PAL... YOU'RE FREE TO GO...

BOY'S A MONSTER...

KIDS LIKE HIM OUGHTA BE LOCKED UP FOREVER...

WHA 8!

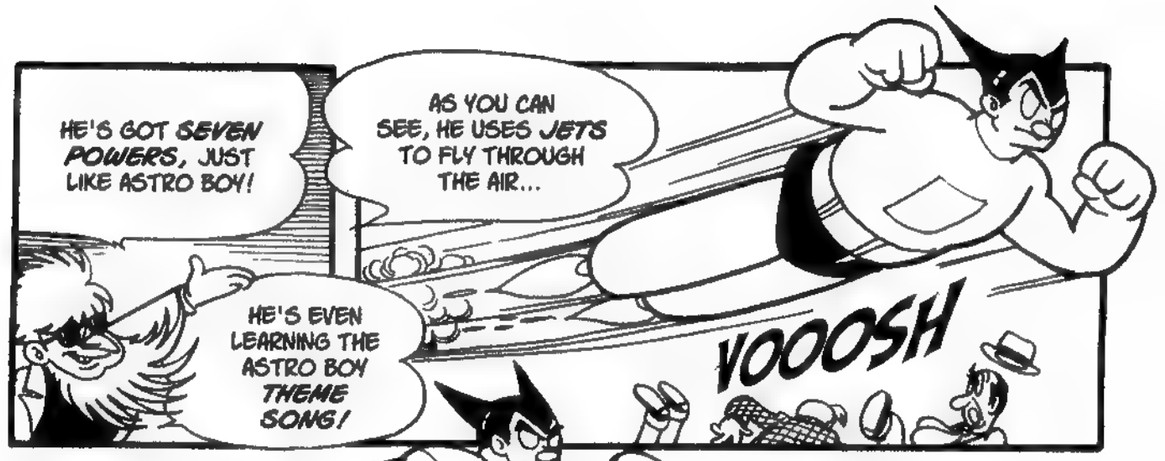
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!

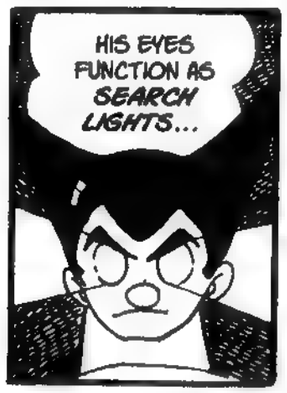


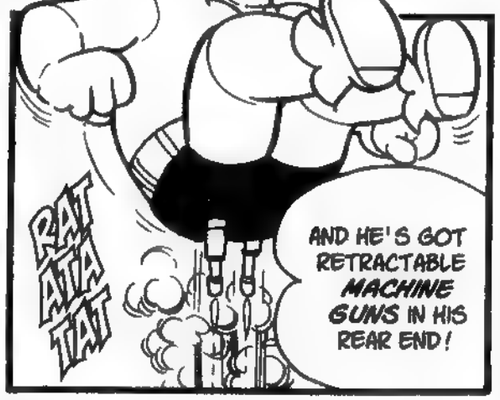
BAD-GUY ROBOTS

First appeared in the August 1964 inaugural issue of *Tetsuwan Atom Club* magazine.

GENTLEMEN... I'VE CALLED YOU HERE FOR A REASON...


HE'S GOT SEVEN POWERS, JUST LIKE ASTRO BOY!
AS YOU CAN SEE, HE USES JETS TO FLY THROUGH THE AIR...
HE'S EVEN LEARNING THE ASTRO BOY THEME SONG!
VOOOSH

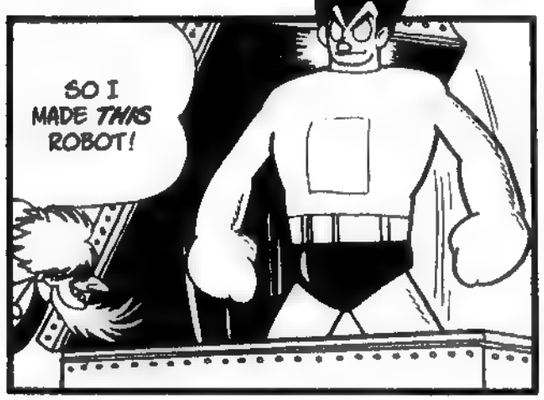

HIS EYES FUNCTION AS SEARCH LIGHTS...

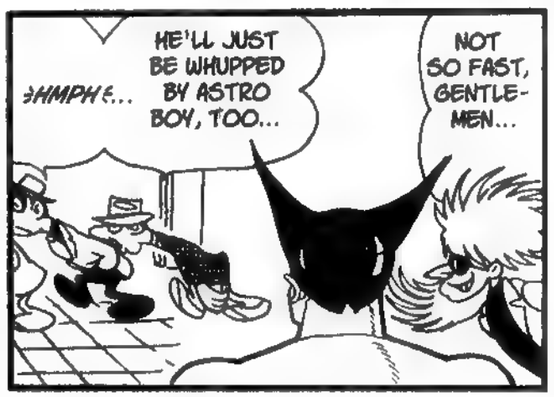

RAT ATA TAT
AND HE'S GOT RETRACTABLE MACHINE GUNS IN HIS REAR END!

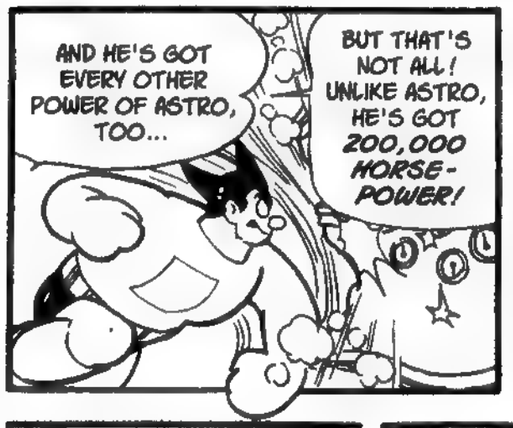
HIS HEARING'S 1000 TIMES BETTER THAN A HUMAN'S...

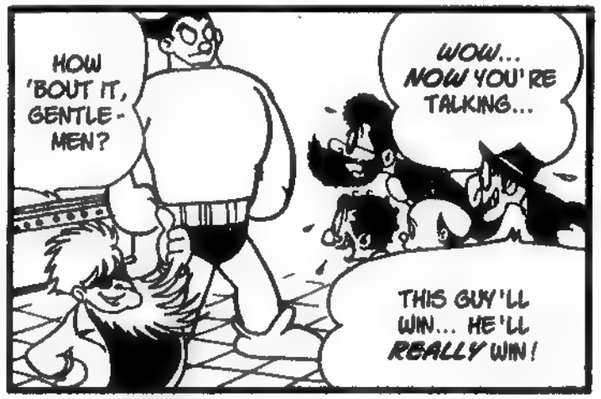
YOU'VE ALL BEEN VICTIMIZED BY ASTRO BOY IN THE PAST!
I'LL SAY! YEAH!

WELL, I'VE DECIDED TO GET REVENGE ON ASTRO...
CRUNCH

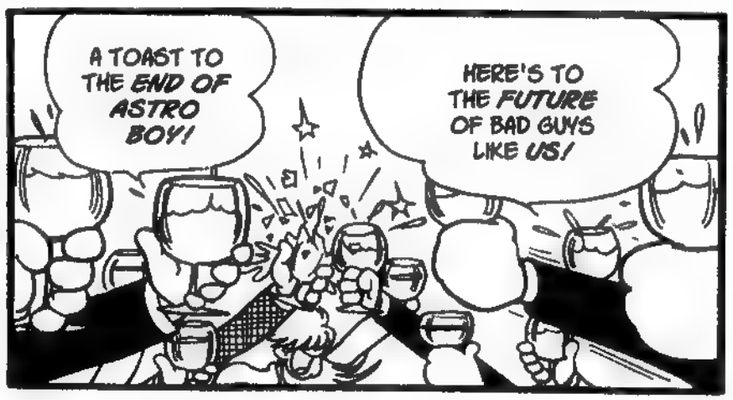

SO I MADE THIS ROBOT!


HMPH!...
HE'LL JUST BE WHUPPED BY ASTRO BOY, TOO...
NOT SO FAST, GENTLE-MEN...


AND HE'S GOT EVERY OTHER POWER OF ASTRO, TOO...
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL! UNLIKE ASTRO, HE'S GOT 200,000 HORSE-POWER!


HOW 'BOUT IT, GENTLE-MEN?
WOW... NOW YOU'RE TALKING...
THIS GUY'LL WIN... HE'LL REALLY WIN!

SO HERE'S MY PLAN... WE LURE ASTRO BOY TO OUTER SPACE, AND THEN, IN A WAY THAT LEAVES NO EVIDENCE, WE SMASH 'IM!
YAY YAY


A TOAST TO THE END OF ASTRO BOY!
HERE'S TO THE FUTURE OF BAD GUYS LIKE US!

ASTRO! YOU GOT A *LETTER!*

A LETTER? WHO'S IT FROM?!

WOW... IT'S FROM *MOONBASE NO. 7...*

IT'S GOT TICKETS FOR THE TRIP AND PERMISSION FOR ME TO TRAVEL... SOMEBODY'S AWFULLY *THOUGHTFUL...*

DEAR ASTRO. PLEASE COME TO VISIT WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU

THERE'S THE ROCKET FOR THE MOON...

READY FOR LIFT-OFF...

HEH HEH HEH... YOU REALLY FELL FOR THIS, DIDN'T YOU, ASTRO BOY...? ACTUALLY, I'M THE ONE WHO SENT THE LETTER...

... AND THIS SHIP'S FILLED WITH ALL THE BAD GUYS YOU'VE BEATEN IN THE PAST...

WE'VE ALL COME ALONG TO WITNESS YOUR *END*, ASTRO... *HEH HEH...*

HEE HEE!

HAR HAR!

ASTRO... HERE'S THE GUY WE'VE ARRANGED TO *FINISH YOU OFF...*

SO YOU TRICKED ME... WELL, DON'T WORRY! I'LL TAKE HIM ON!

COME 'N GET IT, BIG BOY...

SIC 'IM!

HOORAH, BIG BOY...

HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?!

HE'S *STRUG-GLING !!*

HAH HAH... THIS GUY'S NOT EVEN WORTH FIGHTING!

ARGHE... ACKE... ARGHE... HAALP!

WE *SURRENDER !!*

TELL ME, ASTRO... WHAT'D I DO *WRONG?* I GAVE THE ROBOT THE SAME SEVEN POWERS YOU'VE GOT...

WELL, JETS ARE USELESS IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE! AND YOUR ROBOT'S ONLY GOT JETS, RIGHT?

WHEN I'M IN SPACE, I SWITCH TO *ROCKETS...* TOO BAD FOR YOU!! *HA HA!*

THE TIME MACHINE

First appeared in the November 1964 issue of *Tetsuwan Atom Club* magazine.

I'D LIKE TO TEST OUT THIS TIME MACHINE, BUT IT'S PROB'LY DANGEROUS FOR A HUMAN...

GOSH, PROFESSOR... I CAN DO IT...

WITH MY ELECTRO-BRAIN, PILOTING THIS THING'LL BE A *PIECE OF CAKE*...

BE CAREFUL, ASTRO, AND BE SURE TO CONTACT ME...

VOOM

WELL, HERE I AM IN *1951*...

VOOM

RATS... IF ONLY I COULD THINK UP A GOOD HERO FOR A NEW MANGA SERIES...

I'VE GOT A DEADLINE COMING UP FOR A SERIES IN *SHONEN* MAGAZINE, BUT I CAN'T COME UP WITH A GOOD IDEA...

WHAT THE --P!

VOOM

MUST BE A *GHOST!!*

HEH HEH... HOW 'BOUT THAT?... I FINALLY FINISHED MY DRAWING...

I MADE MY NEW HERO LOOK LIKE THAT GHOST I SAW!

HE'LL BE THE STAR OF MY SERIES IN *SHONEN!*

OKAY, *1951*, HERE I COME...

MUSHI PRODUCTIONS

HEY... WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?!

LOOKS LIKE *ASTRO BOY!!*

IT REALLY IS ASTRO...

WELL, I'LL BE... IT'S THE REAL DEAL...

WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT? HE'S JUST LIKE THE TV VERSION, BUT HE'S *ALIVE!*

HE MUST'VE COME FROM THE *FUTURE!*

HEY! THIS IS A *TIME MACHINE!* GIVE US A *RIDE*, ASTRO!

STOP! YOU'LL *BREAK* IT!!

VOOOOM-

300MPH...

THAT *WAS* REALLY ASTRO BOY...

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IN THIS ANIME BUSINESS...

NEXT I'LL LEAP FORWARD TO *2001*...

HERE'S A FREEWAY IN 2001...

THAT'S *TOBIO!* DR. TENMA'S ONLY SON, WHO WAS KILLED IN A CRASH WITH A TRUCK!

PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU! THIS IS *ASTRO!* I'VE GOTTA HELP *TOBIO!*

NO, ASTRO! YOU MUSTN'T! DON'T EVEN THINK OF IT!

IF YOU HELP HIM, YOU'LL *CHANGE HISTORY!*

YOU WANT ME TO STAND BY AND DO *NOTHING* WHILE HE *CRASHES?*

STOP, ASTRO! YOU MUSTN'T DO ANYTHING!

SORRY, PROFESSOR... I HAVE TO HELP!

WATCH OUT, TOBIO!

YIKES !!

SCREECH

WOW... JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME...

WHA?!

TOBIO!

THANK *HEAVENS* YOU'RE OKAY, TOBIO!

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH!

GOSH, THINK NOTHING OF IT...

HEY! WAIT! YOU'RE A *ROBOT,* AREN'T YOU...?

.....
.....
PROFESSOR... I SAVED TOBIO... BUT WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO ME, NOW?
HAPPEN, SHMAP-PEN!
IF TOBIO DOESN'T DIE, YOU WON'T BE BORN, THAT'S WHAT!
YOU'LL DISAPPEAR FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!
THE WHOLE ASTRO BOY MANGA WILL DISAPPEAR! SOB...
I'M GONNA DISAP-PEAR? REALLY?
GOSH... I'M SORRY, PROFES-SOR...
THAT'S ODD... I'M STILL HERE NOW...
DAD, WAS THE BOY WHO SAVED ME REALLY A ROBOT?
HE SURE WAS, TOBIO! A TRULY AMAZING ROBOT!
TELL YOU WHAT, I'M GOING TO MODIFY YOU AND BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE SO YOU LOOK JUST LIKE THAT ROBOT! A 100,000 HORSEPOWER ROBOT, TOBIO!
WHA?! SO TOBIO WAS A ROBOT?!
THAT EXPLAINS EVERY-THING, ASTRO!
YOU SAVED YOURSELF BEFORE YOU WERE MODIFIED TO LOOK LIKE YOU DO NOW!!

THE BRAIN SWAP

First appeared in the October 1964 issue of *Tetsuwan Atom Club* magazine.

OKAY, BOYS 'N GIRLS... I'M GOING TO ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS OF THE LAST TEST...

AS USUAL, ***ASTRO'S*** AT THE TOP, WITH A PERFECT SCORE. HE'S FOLLOWED BY ***IJI***, WHO GOT ONLY ONE QUESTION WRONG. ***SHIBUGAKI***, AS USUAL, IS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST, WITH MINUS SIXTY-TWO.

I CAN'T STAND THIS...

AW, DON'T WORRY, SHIB... YOU OUGHTA BE USED TO IT BY NOW...

UNFORTUNATELY, ***DAIFUKU*** REPLIES ARE EXACTLY THE SAME AS SHIBUGAKI'S...

...SO HIS SCORE, IS ***ALSO*** MINUS SIXTY-TWO.

IDIOT! THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO COPY ME!

TEACHER...

WHAT IS IT, IJI?

I DON'T WANT TO BE COMPARED TO ASTRO, HERE. HE'S A ***ROBOT***, RIGHT?

ASTRO'S GOT AN ELECTRO-BRAIN, SO HE'S OBVIOUSLY GOING TO DO WELL ON TESTS!

NO, IJI! I'M JUST LIKE HUMANS!

HE CAN LEARN WITHOUT STUDYING, TEACHER...

LISTEN, IJI! IT'S TRUE HE'S A ***ROBOT***, BUT HE HAS TO STUDY JUST LIKE YOU! GET HOLD OF YOURSELF!!

AGAAH!...

HIS JAW GOT BENT OUT OF SHAPE FROM YELLING...

YOU GOT THE BEST GRADES, ASTRO, BUT DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD...

I ***HATE*** LOSING OUT TO SOME BLASTED ROBOT...!

MOM... THERE'S A ROBOT IN MY CLASS, 'N HE ALWAYS GETS THE BEST GRADES...

HELLO? IS THIS THE PRINCIPAL?!

LISTEN, I'M THE MOTHER OF IJI, THE BOY IN THE SIXTH GRADE'S "A" SECTION...

MY BOY SAYS THERE'S A *ROBOT* IN YOUR CLASS!

HE SAYS THAT AS A RESULT THE HUMAN CHILDREN IN THE CLASS CAN'T STUDY PROPERLY... WELL, *DO* SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

MADAM... YOU'RE ASKING THE *IMPOS-SIBLE!*

WE CAN'T TRANSFER ASTRO BOY TO ANOTHER SCHOOL!

TO BEGIN WITH, ROBOTS AND HUMANS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS THESE DAYS!

SOMETIMES I CAN'T BELIEVE THESE MOTHERS!

AS LONG AS THERE ARE HUMANS LIKE HER AROUND, I'LL ALWAYS FEEL SORRY FOR ROBOTS!

I CAN'T *STAND IT*, MOM... I'LL *NEVER* BE TOP IN THE CLASS AS LONG AS *ASTRO'S* AROUND...

DAD SAYS I HAVE TO BE NUMBER ONE, AND IF I'M NOT, HE'LL NEVER BUY ME A *CAR!!* >WAAH!<

I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY, DEAR... I'LL DO SOMETHING!

HELLO? IS THIS THE ROBOT FACTORY?

SURE IS, LADY... NEED A ROBOT REPAIRED?

NO! I WANT YOU TO SWAP ONE ROBOT'S *BRAIN* WITH *ANOTHER*...

WITH ANOTHER, NEWER ELECTRO-BRAIN, THAT IS...

B-BUT IF I DO THAT, MA'AM, IT'LL BE LIKE A BRAND-NEW ROBOT!

THAT'S THE IDEA... AND I WANT YOU TO DO IT IN *SECRET!* UNDERSTAND?!

WHO'S THERE?!

WHAA?!

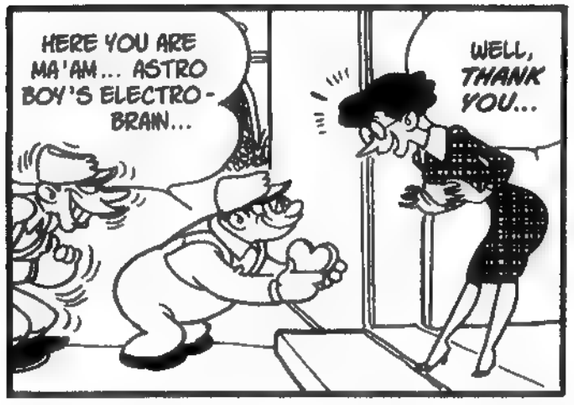
SLUMP

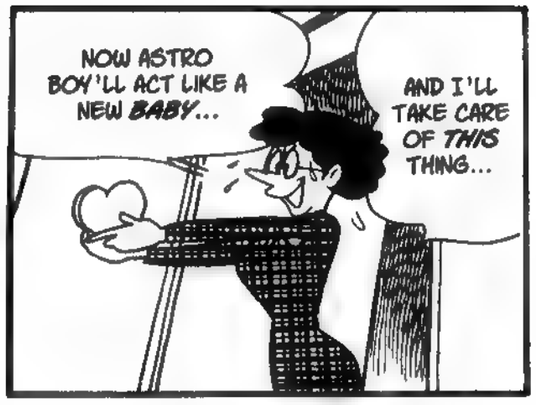
I FEEL SORRY FOR THE KID, BUT, HEY, A JOB'S A JOB...

ASTRO!

FLICKER

ASTRO! WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH YOU? GET A *HOLD* OF YOURSELF!

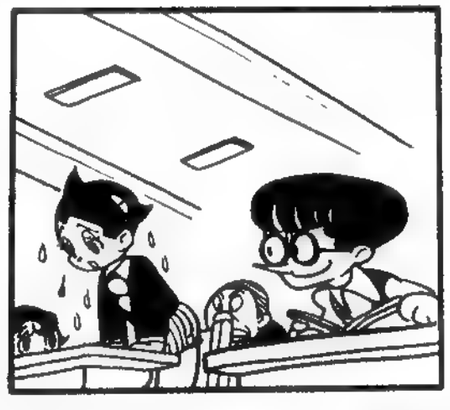

HERE YOU ARE MA'AM... ASTRO BOY'S ELECTRO-BRAIN...
WELL, THANK YOU...


NOW ASTRO BOY'LL ACT LIKE A NEW BABY...
AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS THING...

UM, IF YOU GIVE US A BIG TIP, MA'AM, WE MIGHT KEEP QUIET ABOUT ALL THIS...
BIG TIP?! WHAT KIND OF FOOL DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?!

WHAT A SCROOGE !!
NOW MY SON'LL FINALLY BE TOP IN HIS CLASS...
BOOO!!

ASTRO! WHY CAN'T YOU SOLVE THIS PROBLEM?! YOU'RE WORSE THAN A THIRD GRADER NOW!



WONDER WHAT'S WRONG WITH ASTRO? HE'S LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON, ER, I MEAN ROBOT...

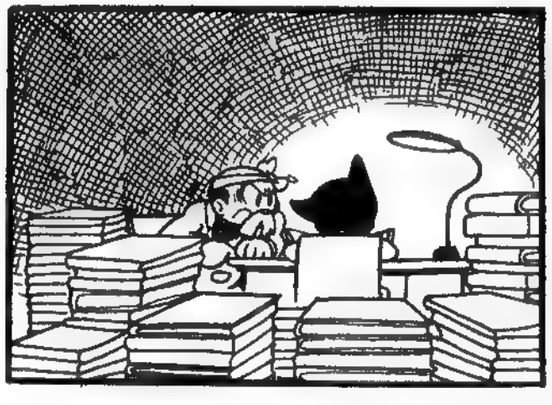
MUSTACHIO! IT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE SWAPPED OUT HIS ELECTRO-BRAIN! THAT'S WHY HE DOESN'T SEEM THE SAME!

YOU MEAN I'M S'POSED TO FAIL HIM? I CAN'T DO THAT TO ASTRO...

UM, TEACHER ...

I...I'LL DO MY BEST... I'LL STUDY REAL HARD AND TRY TO BE LIKE I WAS BEFORE... HONEST...

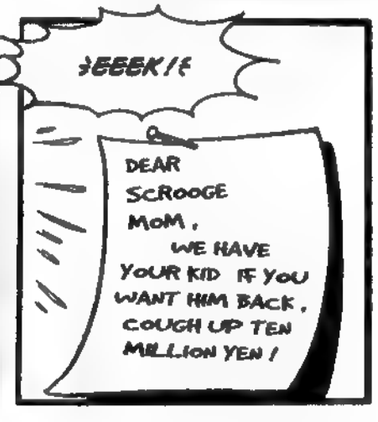
YOU CAN DO IT, ASTRO! I KNOW YOU WON'T LET ANY HUMANS BEAT YOU!



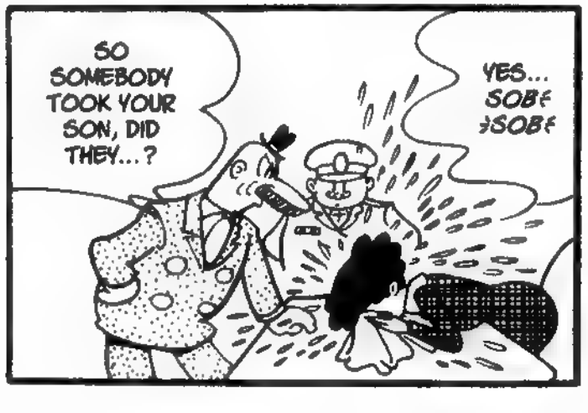
ZZZZZZZ

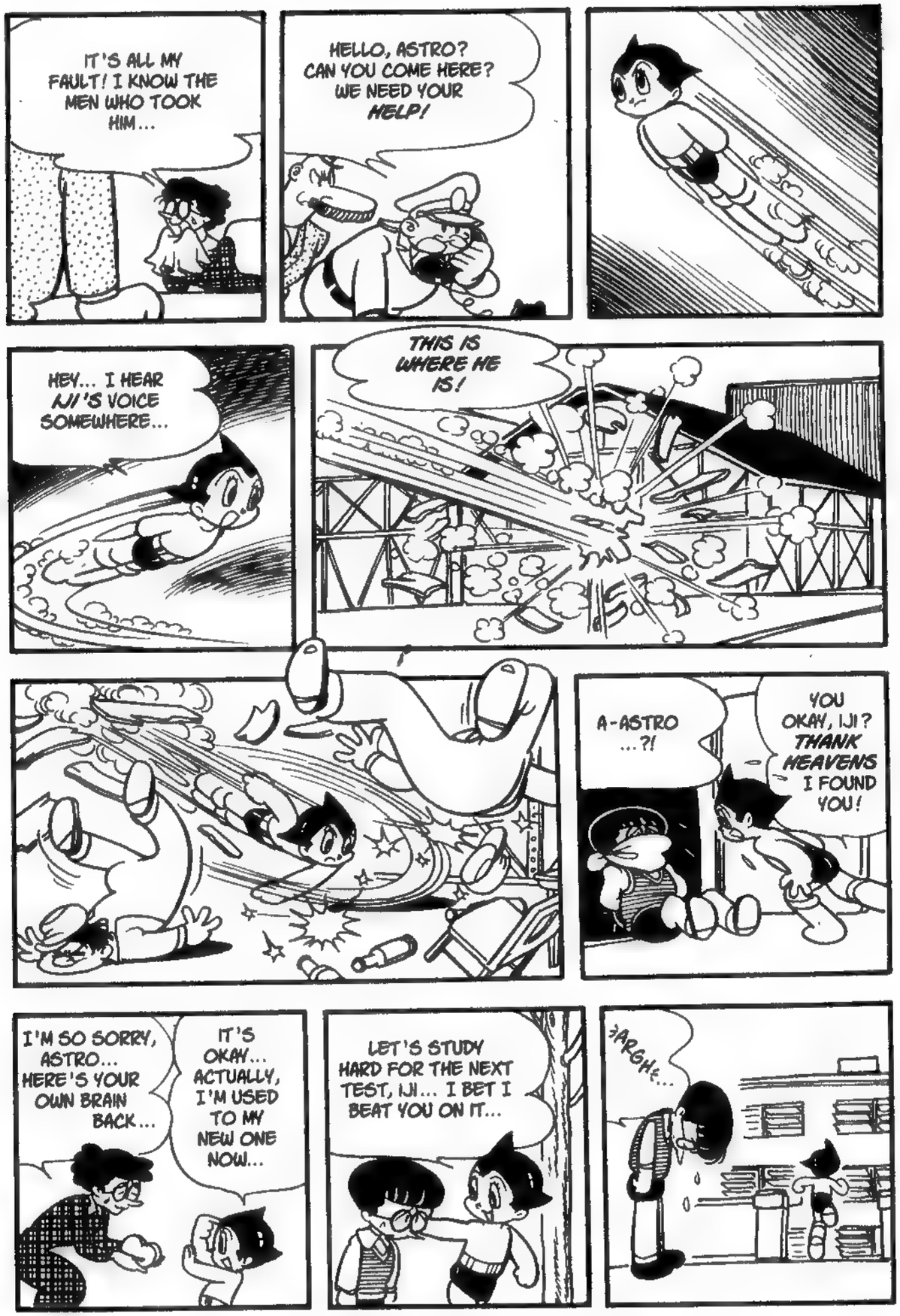
WHERE'S MY BABY ?!

WHERE'D HE GO?!
HOW ODD...


EEEK!
DEAR SCROOGE MOM, WE HAVE YOUR KID IF YOU WANT HIM BACK, COUGH UP TEN MILLION YEN!

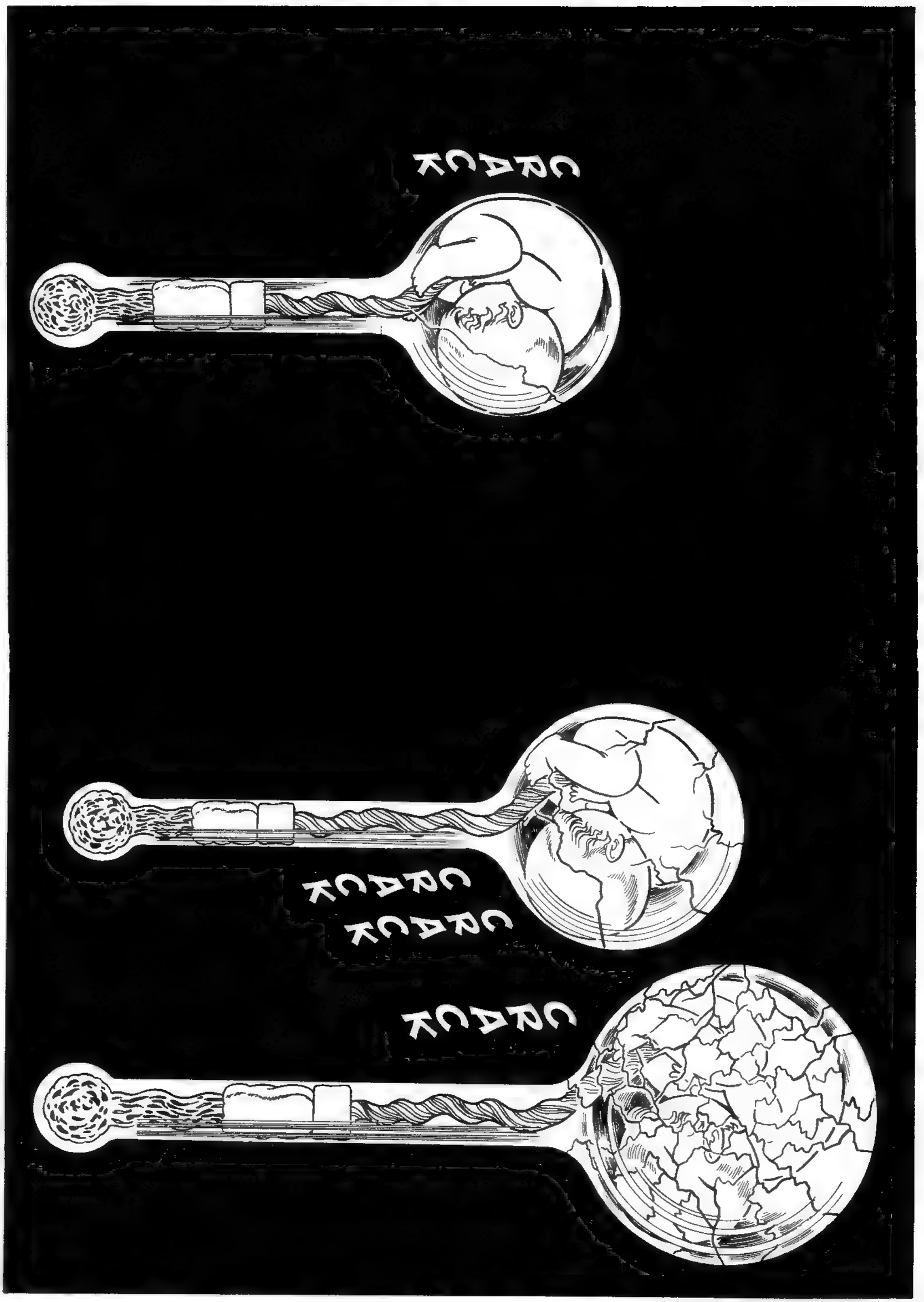
P-POLICE??
MY SON'S BEEN KIDNAPPED!


SO SOMEBODY TOOK YOUR SON, DID THEY...?
YES... SOB SOB


IT'S ALL MY FAULT! I KNOW THE MEN WHO TOOK HIM...
HELLO, ASTRO? CAN YOU COME HERE? WE NEED YOUR HELP!
HEY... I HEAR IJI'S VOICE SOMEWHERE...
THIS IS WHERE HE IS!
A-ASTRO ...?!
YOU OKAY, IJI? THANK HEAVENS I FOUND YOU!
I'M SO SORRY, ASTRO... HERE'S YOUR OWN BRAIN BACK...
IT'S OKAY... ACTUALLY, I'M USED TO MY NEW ONE NOW...
LET'S STUDY HARD FOR THE NEXT TEST, IJI... I BET I BEAT YOU ON IT...
ARGH...

THE END OF ASTRO BOY

First appeared in the July 1970 issue of *Bessatsu Shonen* magazine.



SMASH

WAAAAAAH...WAAH

FINALLY... OUR BABY'S BORN...

CUT THE UMBILICAL CORD, DEAR... HE WON'T NEED THE NUTRITION TANK ANY MORE...

WAAH WAAAH WAAAH

LIKE THIS ?

I HOPE HE GROWS UP TO BE STRONG AND HEALTHY ...

MAYBE WE SHOULD NAME HIM "TAKEO"! THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS...

YOU'RE RIGHT DEAR... *TAKEO TETSUKAWA*... THAT'D BE A GREAT NAME...

SCREECH

WHO GOES THERE?!

UNGHH...

BZAAP

CLACK CLACK

CLACK

CLACK

KLAK KLAK KLAK

HERE HE IS!

SMASH SMASH SMASH

THIS IS THE GUY WE BRING TO LIFE!

LET'S FILL HIM WITH FUEL!

BZZZP BEEP BZZZT

BEEP BZZZT

VOOM

BEEP BEEP

CRACKLE

ASTRO!

WHO... WOKE ME UP...?

WH... WHERE AM I?

YOU'RE IN A *ROBOT MUSEUM!*

WE NEED YOUR HELP, SO WE WOKE YOU UP... WE NEED YOU TO PROTECT US... SOME ROBOTS'RE AFTER US!

LET ME LOOK INTO YOUR EYES ...

WHY DO YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU? WHO'S AFTER YOU?

YOU'VE GOTTA HEAR ME OUT, ASTRO...

"I'M *TAKEO TETSUKAWA*, AND THE GIRL WITH ME'S *JULIE*... WE'RE IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER, ASTRO! YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS, RIGHT?"

"I FIRST MET JULIE WHEN I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD..."

HI... WHO'RE YOU?

HI... I'M JULIE...

HEH HEH...

JULIE'S A WEIRD NAME, BUT YOU'RE JAPANESE, RIGHT?

YEAH, IN JAPANESE MY REAL NAME'S JURI...

WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER HERE 'N PLAY WITH ME...?

HOKAY...

HOW COME YOU DON'T HAVE ANY TOYS? WON'T YOUR PARENTS BUY YOU ANY?

THEY DO, BUT I'M SICK OF THEM...

MOST TOYS 'RE WEAPONS... LASER GUNS AN' DYNAMITE AN' STUFF LIKE THAT, RIGHT?

THEY'RE ALL *BOYS'* TOYS. I WANT TO DRAW *PICTURES*...

PICTURES? HOW *BORING!!*

BNNNAAAD

LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO THE POOR *FLOWERS!*

YOU'VE GOT SOME ROPE THERE, RIGHT? LET'S PRE-TEND TO *HANG* EACH OTHER. IT'LL BE COOL!

B-BUT HOW DO YOU DO THAT?

LIKE THIS... I PUSH YOU OFF ON THE COUNT OF THREE...

SHOOZK

.....!

EEEEK!!

WHAT'VE YOU DONE TO MY BABY?!

YOU COULD'VE *KILLED* HER!!

HEH HEH HEH...

TAKEO... WHAT'S GOING ON?!

IT'S JUST KIDS PLAYING, THAT'S ALL...

I DON'T CARE... HE WAS TRYING TO *KILL* HER!! IT'S *AWFUL!*

DADDY'S HOME!!

HI, DADDY! DID YOU BRING ME A PRESENT?

WOW... JUST WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED!

WHAT'S GOING ON, TAKEO... YOU DO SOMETHING TO THE GIRL NEXT DOOR?

NAW... SHE'S A WEIRDO, DADDY... SAYS SHE WANTS TO DRAW *PICTURES...*

WELL, THAT'S JUST BECAUSE SHE'S BEEN RAISED WRONG...

RIGHT, MOTHER?

.....
.....

IS IT TRUE I WAS BORN IN A TUBE AN' NOT FROM YOU, MOMMY?

THAT'S RIGHT, DEAR... ALL BABIES ARE BORN IN TUBES THESE DAYS...

IN THE OLD DAYS, THEY SAY BABIES GREW INSIDE THEIR MOTHERS' STOMACHS, TAKEO...

BUT NOW DRIED AND PRESERVED SPERM AND EGGS ARE MIXED TOGETHER INSIDE TUBES, AND THE EGGS'RE FERTILIZED TO PRODUCE BABIES...

HMPH... DOESN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE TO ME...

BUT I GUESS IT WAS EASIER FOR YOU, RIGHT MOMMY?

C'N I ASK ANOTHER QUESTION, MOMMY?

PEOPLE GET OLDER, RIGHT?

HOW COME YOU AN' DADDY NEVER DO?

.....
.....

DADDY'S GETTING OLDER, TAKEO...

BUT COMPARED TO YOU, I'M JUST NOT GROWING OLD VERY *FAST*...

GOSH... I SURE AM LUCKY, *HUH?*

YOU'RE GONNA BE YOUNG FOREVER, MOMMY!

YOU'LL NEVER TURN INTO A WRINKLED OL' GRANNY...

MRS. TETSUKAWA!!

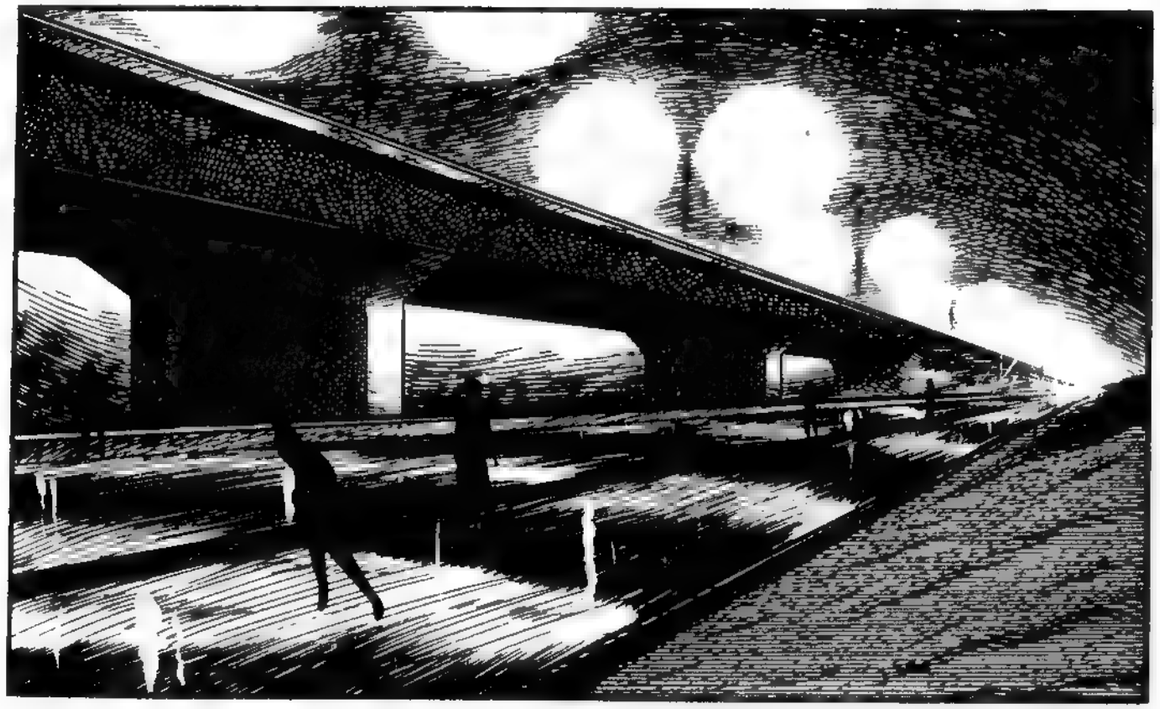
LISTEN, MY DAUGHTER JULIE'S RUN AWAY FROM HOME! HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING?!

WHAT?! NO... I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY-THING ...

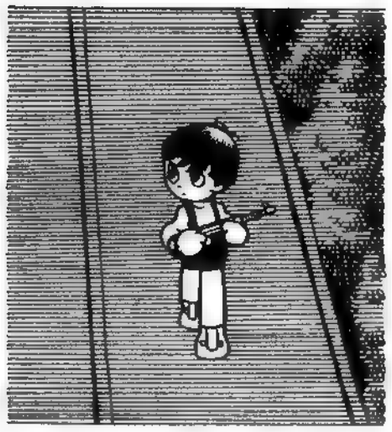
I'VE *GOT* TO FIND HER! SHE HAS NO IDEA HOW WORRIED I AM!

I'LL HELP!

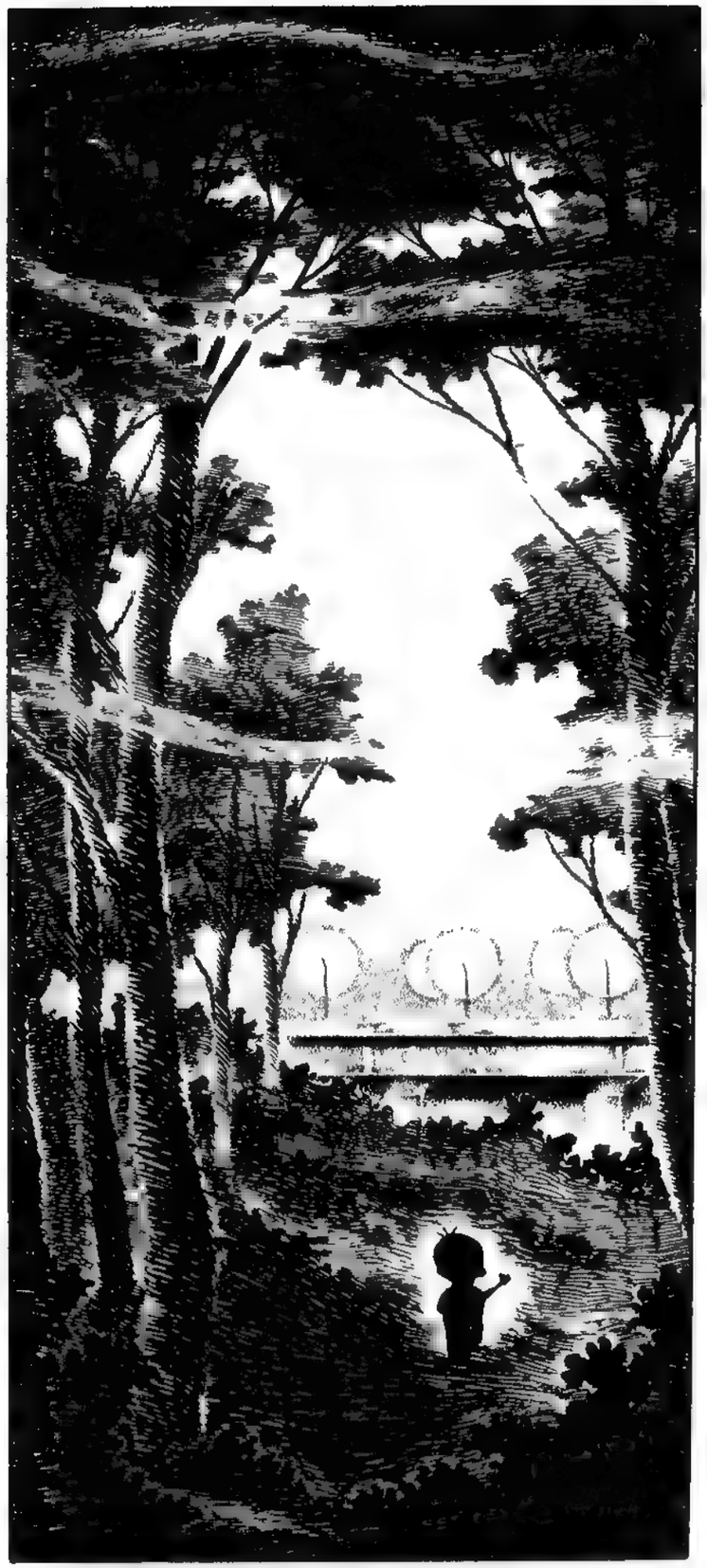
NO, TAKEO... YOU STAY HERE!

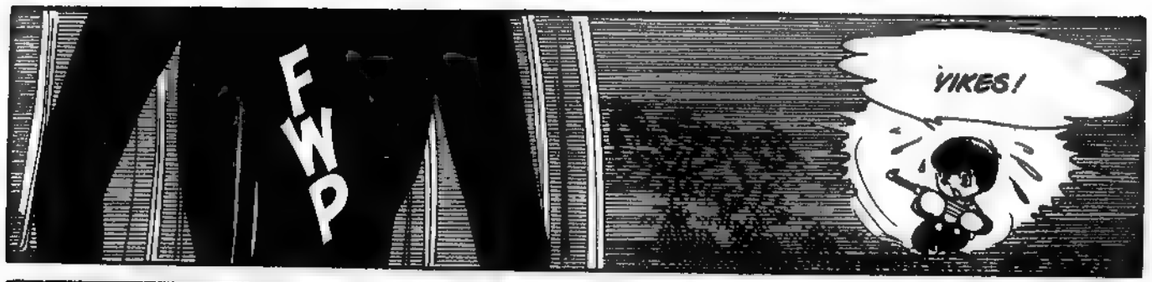


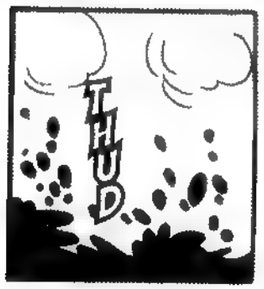
"ALL THE NEIGHBORHOOD PARENTS WENT OUT LOOKING FOR JULIE... I FORGOT ABOUT WHAT MOTHER HAD TOLD ME AND WENT OUT WITH MY GUN..."

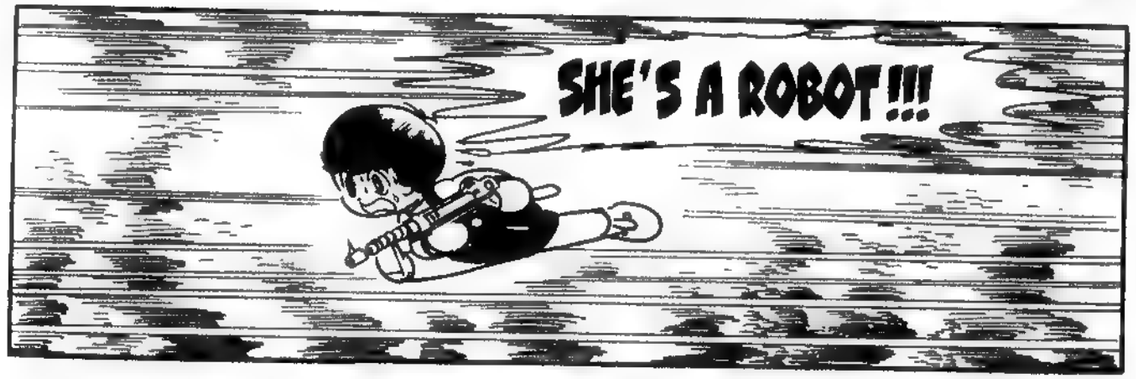


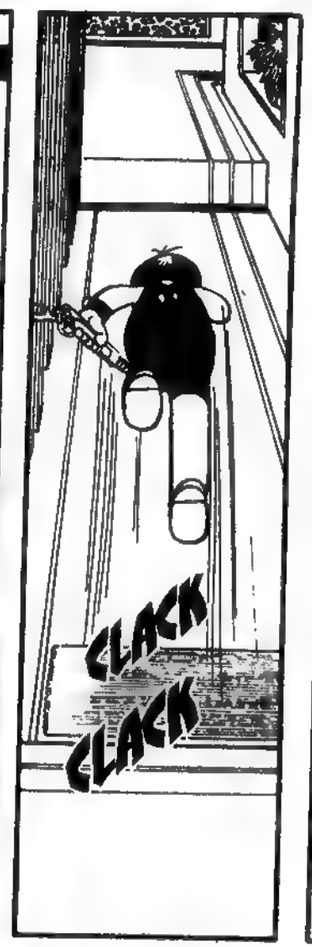
"THE NIGHT FOG WAS CHILLY, AND THE GRASS AND STREET WERE WET. I SNUCK INTO THE WOODS ON MY OWN, WHERE IT WAS ALMOST PITCH DARK..."

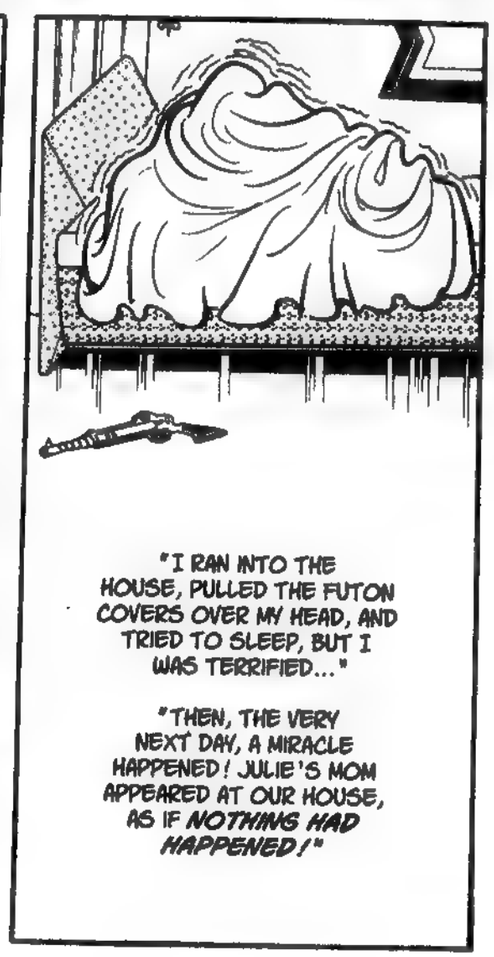












"I RAN INTO THE HOUSE, PULLED THE FUTON COVERS OVER MY HEAD, AND TRIED TO SLEEP, BUT I WAS TERRIFIED..."

"THEN, THE VERY NEXT DAY, A MIRACLE HAPPENED! JULIE'S MOM APPEARED AT OUR HOUSE, AS IF *NOTHING HAD HAPPENED!*"

"I LOOKED AT JULIE'S MOM... SHE MUST'VE BEEN REPAIRED, BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T HAVE A *SCRATCH* ON HER FROM THE PREVIOUS NIGHT..."

"AS FOR JULIE HERSELF, SHE HAD APPARENTLY BEEN FOUND AND RETURNED HOME. BUT FOR A LONG TIME AFTER THAT, I NEVER SAW HER."

"TEN YEARS LATER, I FINALLY MET JULIE AGAIN..."

TRA LA LA LA LA

"SHE WAS ALL GROWN UP, AND SO BEAUTIFUL I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT WAS THE SAME PERSON..."

"THERE WAS NO SIGN OF WHATEVER PROBLEM HAD LED HER TO RUN AWAY FROM HOME THAT NIGHT..."

"STILL, JULIE DIDN'T KNOW THE BIG SECRET THAT I KNEW... THAT HER MOM WAS REALLY A *ROBOT!*"

"WHEN WE MET AGAIN, WE WERE ATTRACTED TO EACH OTHER, AND WE STARTED MEETING IN SECRET..."

KISS

DID YOU TELL YOUR MOM ABOUT US, JULIE?

NO... NOT YET, TAKEO...

WELL, YOU'VE GOTTA TELL HER... I'M SURE SHE'LL SAY IT'S OKAY... AFTER ALL, SHE'S A *ROBOT*...

SHE IS *NOT!*

YES, SHE IS...

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

.....
.....

MY MOTHER'S NO ROBOT! DON'T EVER SAY THAT AGAIN!

IF *MY* MOTHER'S A ROBOT, TAKEO, SO'S *YOUR* MOTHER AND DAD!

HA HA HA! THAT'S A GOOD ONE!

THEY EAT AND EVEN GO TO THE *BATHROOM*...

ROBOTS DON'T DO THAT!

WELL, THAT'S TRUE OF *MY* MOM, TOO!

BESIDES, WHAT'S IT MATTER IF YOUR PARENTS ARE HUMAN OR ROBOT?

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...

WE'RE HUMAN, AFTER ALL...

... AND WE *LOVE* EACH OTHER...

I'LL TELL MY DAD ABOUT US FIRST...

I KNOW MY DAD'LL UNDER-STAND...

HI, MOM... WHERE'S DAD?

NO!!

I WON'T ALLOW IT!

WHEN I SAY "NO," TAKEO, I *MEAN* "NO"!

B-BUT DAD... WE *LOVE* EACH OTHER!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?!

MOTHER, COME HERE A MINUTE...

TAKEO SAYS HE'S IN LOVE WITH JULIE NEXT DOOR...

MY *GOODNESS*... HA HA HA...

TEE HEE HEE HEE...

HA HA HA HA....

HEH HEH HEH!

GWA HA HA HA!

WHAT THE --?

MAYBE IT'S OKAY TO TELL HIM NOW... WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I AGREE ...

THUD

IT'S A *GLADIATOR'S* LICENSE, TAKEO...

WITH THAT, IF YOU JUST APPLY...

...YOU CAN GO TO THE COLISEUM AND FIGHT OTHER HUMANS!

GLADI-ATOR?

HUMANS LOVE TO FIGHT, TAKEO... THAT'S WHY WE RAISE BOTH MALES AND FEMALES TO BECOME GOOD, STRONG FIGHTERS...

WE RAISED *YOU* TO BE A *GLADIATOR*, SON...

IT'S A SPORT *ROBOTS* ENJOY WATCHING...

IT'S WHY WE ALWAYS BOUGHT YOU WEAPONS WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE... BECAUSE WE WANTED YOU TO GROW UP TO BE *STRONG!*

AS I'M SURE YOU'VE GUESSED BY NOW, TAKEO, *I'M A ROBOT...* AND SO'S YOUR *MOM*, TOO...

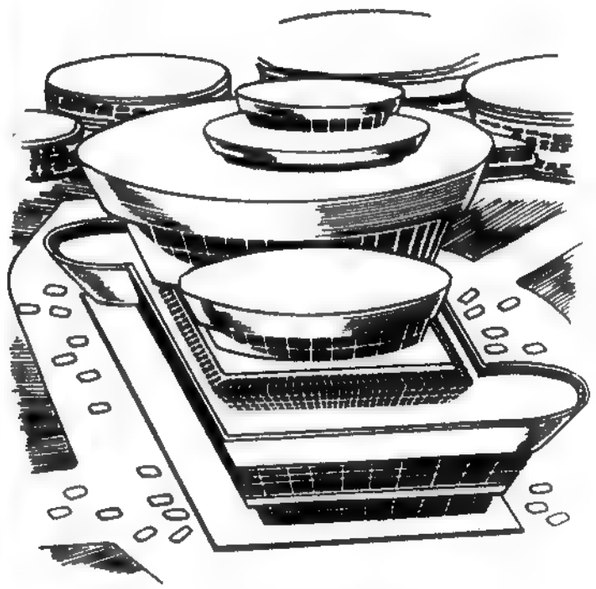
Y-YOU MEAN I'M NOT REALLY YOUR SON?

AND I-IF I'M NOT YOUR SON...

...WHOSE SON AM I THEN?!

"TAKEO, I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD OF THE *MFC BANK* IN TOKYO... THEY STORE HEALTHY HUMAN EGGS AND SPERM THERE..."

"WE APPLIED FOR SOME, AND OUR REQUEST WAS GRANTED..."



HUMANS DON'T HAVE REAL FAMILIES, SEE...

ALL HUMANS TODAY ARE *RAISED BY ROBOTS...* THEY LIVE IN HOMES HEADED BY ROBOTS...

I'M SURE YOU'RE WONDERING WHY?

"WELL, IT'S BECAUSE OF A DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF HUMANS. A DRASTIC DECLINE, CAUSED BY RADIATION AND POLLUTION... HUMANS WEREN'T ABLE TO FUNCTION ANYMORE ON THEIR OWN, SEE?"

Y-YOU MEAN THAT HUMANS BECAME...

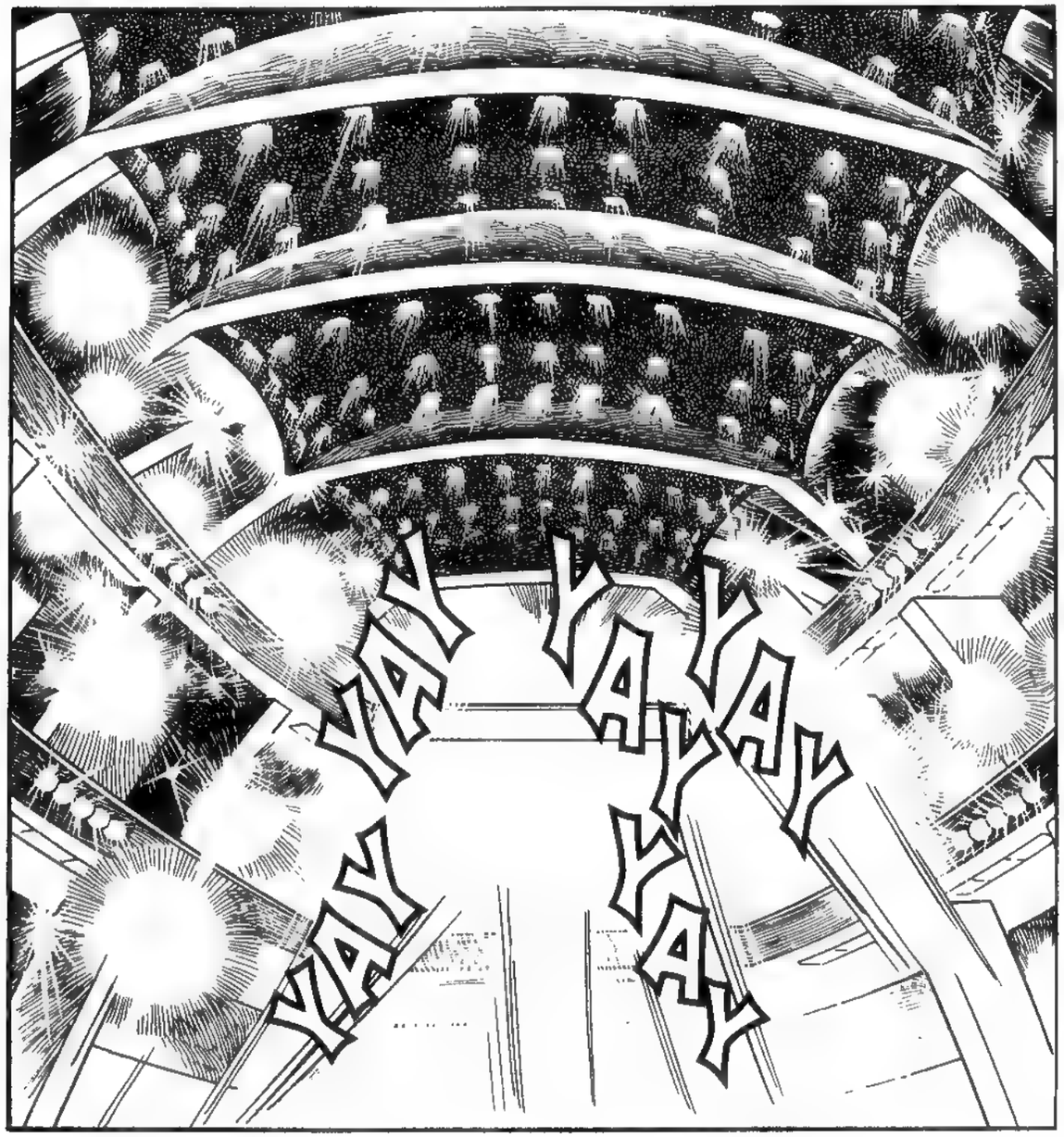
...LIKE DOMESTICATED ANIMALS FOR ROBOTS? LIKE *PETS*?!

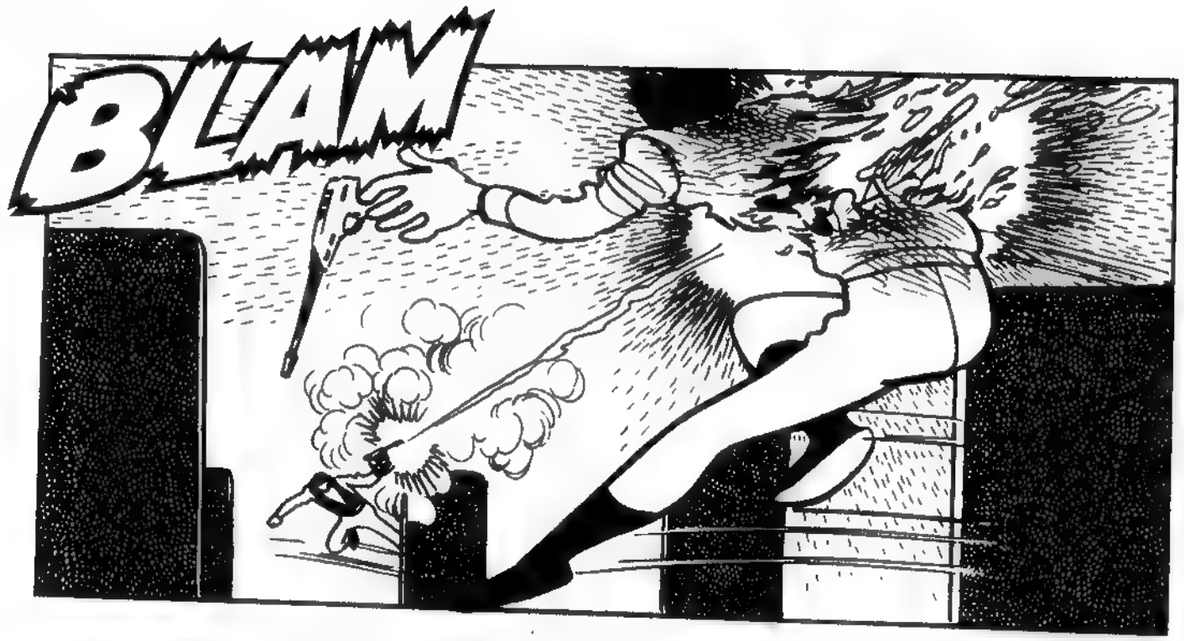
WELL, NOT ME!!

NO *WAY* I'M GONNA BE A GLADIATOR! I'M TEARING UP THIS DOCUMENT RIGHT NOW!

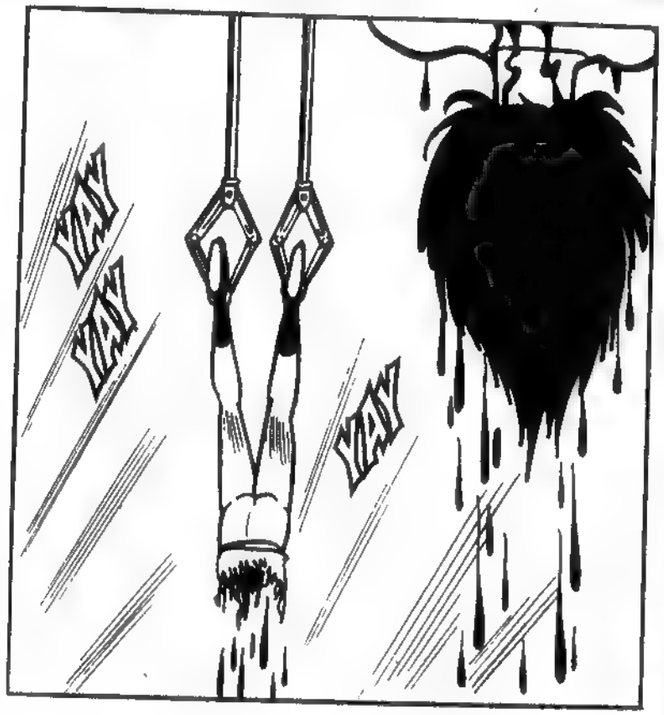
SILENCE, HUMAN!! THAT IS *ENOUGH!!*

I'VE INVESTED HEAVILY IN YOU, TAKEO! THERE'S NO WAY I'LL LET YOU QUIT NOW! I'M SENDING YOU TO THE COLISEUM, NO MATTER WHAT!


YAY YAY YAY YAY YAY YAY


BLAM

KERPOW


YAY
YAY
YAY

YAY YAY YAY
PANT PUFF PANT PANT

LAAADIES AND GENTLEMEN! AND NOW FOR TODAY'S MAIN EVENT!! IN THE ONE CORNER, WE HAVE **TAKEO TETSUKAWA,** AN IC TYPE WITH A REGISTRATION NUMBER OF 2318697, BELONGING TO MR. AND MRS. TETSUKAWA...

HOW DO YOU THINK TAKEO'LL DO, MR. TETSUKAWA?

WELL, I WANTED TO TRAIN HIM A BIT MORE...

...BUT I COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER TO GET HIM INTO THE GAMES.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK HIS CHANCES OF WINNING ARE?

HE'S AN INCREDIBLY BRAVE BOY, SO I'M SURE HE'LL KILL SEVEN OR EIGHT OPPONENTS... *HEE HEE HEE...*

LAADIES AND GENTLEMEN... WE HAVE AN APOLOGY TO MAKE: WE ARE CURRENTLY UNABLE TO LOCATE TAKEO TETSUKAWA, SCHEDULED TO APPEAR IN THE MAIN EVENT! BEAR WITH US A FEW MORE MINUTES, AS WE ARE STILL SEARCHING FOR HIM...

KABAM

♪PANT♪

♪PUFF♪

BZAAAP

DARNED IF *I'M* GONNA BE IN A KILLING MATCH WITH PEOPLE I DON'T KNOW...

VRROOOM

VROOOOM

SCREECH!

JULIE!!

I'VE GOT A CAR, AND YOU'VE GOTTA COME WITH ME! LET'S LEAVE THESE ROBOTS BEHIND PERMANENTLY, AND FIND A WORLD OF OUR *OWN!!*

B-BUT I *CAN'T...*

TAKEO! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING WITH JULIE?!!

UH OH...

BZAAAP

MOTHER

SEE, JULIE? SHE *WAS* A ROBOT!! NOW, GET IN! WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!

SOB

WE'LL HEAD FOR THE AIRPORT, GRAB A SMALL PLANE THERE, AND ESCAPE ...

WE BRING YOU AN EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT! A HUMAN GLADIATOR HAS ESCAPED FROM THE COLISEUM AND IS BELIEVED TO BE TRYING TO FLEE THE COUNTRY. ANYONE SPOTTING THIS MAN SHOULD IMMEDIATELY CONTACT THE AUTHORITIES...

VROOOM

VROOOM

IT'S A *ROAD BLOCK*, TAKEO...

BLAST IT...

SCREECH

WELL, IF WE CAN'T USE THE AIRPORT, THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER WAY OUT OF HERE...

HERE, YOU'D BETTER TRY'N DISGUISE YOURSELF...

HEY, THAT'S THE *ROBOT MUSEUM* THERE... I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING...

NOW WE'RE TALKING ...

SAYS RIGHT HERE... "ASTRO BOY, BORN IN 2003, WAS A HUMANOID ROBOT WITH SEVEN SPECIAL POWERS, AND A 100,000 HORSEPOWER ENGINE. HE WAS CREATED BY DR. TENMA IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE'S DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY."

IN OTHER WORDS, THIS ROBOT WAS CREATED NEARLY FIFTY YEARS AGO. YOU EVER HEAR ABOUT HIM, JULIE?

IN THOSE DAYS, ROBOTS WERE ***FRIENDS*** OF PEOPLE... THEY EVEN HAD WHAT WAS CALLED A ***"ROBOT LAW,"*** THAT MADE SURE ROBOTS WORKED FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY...

I'VE READ ABOUT ASTRO BOY, AND I KNOW HE DIED TRYING TO ***SAVE*** HUMANS...

... SO THAT'S THE STORY, ASTRO BOY...

I KNOW YOU WERE CREATED OVER FIFTY YEARS AGO...

I KNOW ROBOTS TODAY ARE A LOT MORE ADVANCED AND NUMEROUS AND THAT HUMANS ARE BEING PERSECUTED BY THEM...

WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHETHER YOU'LL BE OUR SAVIOR OR OUR ENEMY, WHETHER YOU'LL SIDE WITH THE ROBOTS OR WITH US!

SO, WHICH IS IT, ASTRO BOY?

.....
.....

WE HUMANS MAY BE WEAK NOW...

BUT EVEN IF KILLED, WE WANT TO LIVE IN ***LOVE***...

WELL, I CAN TELL YOU AND JULIE REALLY DO LOVE EACH OTHER...

I DO! FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART!

AND YOU'RE SURE YOUR FEELINGS'LL NEVER CHANGE?

THEY'LL NEVER CHANGE!

BUT I'VE NO TIME! THERE'RE ROBOTS AFTER ME!

TRAMP TRAMP

HANG ON TIGHT TO ME!

VOOOSH

THEY'VE TAKEN TO THE SKY! THEY'RE TRYING TO ESCAPE THROUGH THE AIR!

AFTER 'EM!!

ROBOTS AROUND THE WORLD WILL HATE YOU FOR HELPING US, ASTRO...

I KNOW...

THIS'LL GAIN US SOME TIME 'TIL THEY COME AFTER YOU...

I'LL LET YOU DOWN ON THAT ISLAND THERE...

WELL, JULIE... LOOKS LIKE WE'LL BE LIVING HERE ALONE FOR AWHILE...

WHERE'RE YOU GOING, ASTRO?

I'M GOING TO GO FIGHT THE PEOPLE COMING AFTER YOU...

THANKS, ASTRO... *THANKS...*

I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN FOR YOU, TAKEO...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THIS ALL HAPPENED...

WHEN I WAS CREATED, ROBOTS *SERVED* HUMANS, AND EVERYTHING SEEMED TO GO FINE...

I WONDER IF IT WAS ALL AN *ILLUSION?*

MAYBE PEOPLE DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE IT?

ANYWAY, I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT YOU TWO, BECAUSE YOU SEEM TO REALLY LOVE EACH OTHER...

...EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE A *HUMAN* AND A *ROBOT* ...

WAIT A MINUTE ...

DID YOU SAY *"A HUMAN AND A ROBOT"...?*

LISTEN, I'M A *HUMAN,* ASTRO!

I KNOW, TAKEO... I'M TALKING ABOUT *JULIE!*

JULIE...?!

A ROBOT *?!*

IT CAN'T BE!

TELL ME YOU'RE A HUMAN, JULIE! TELL ME!!

YOU ARE, RIGHT?! YOU *MUST* BE!

JULIE...

JULIE ...

GOSH... I THOUGHT YOU *KNEW,* TAKEO...

I KNEW RIGHT AWAY...

UH OH... I HEAR ROBOTS COMING FOR YOU!!

THEY'RE HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THIS ISLAND!

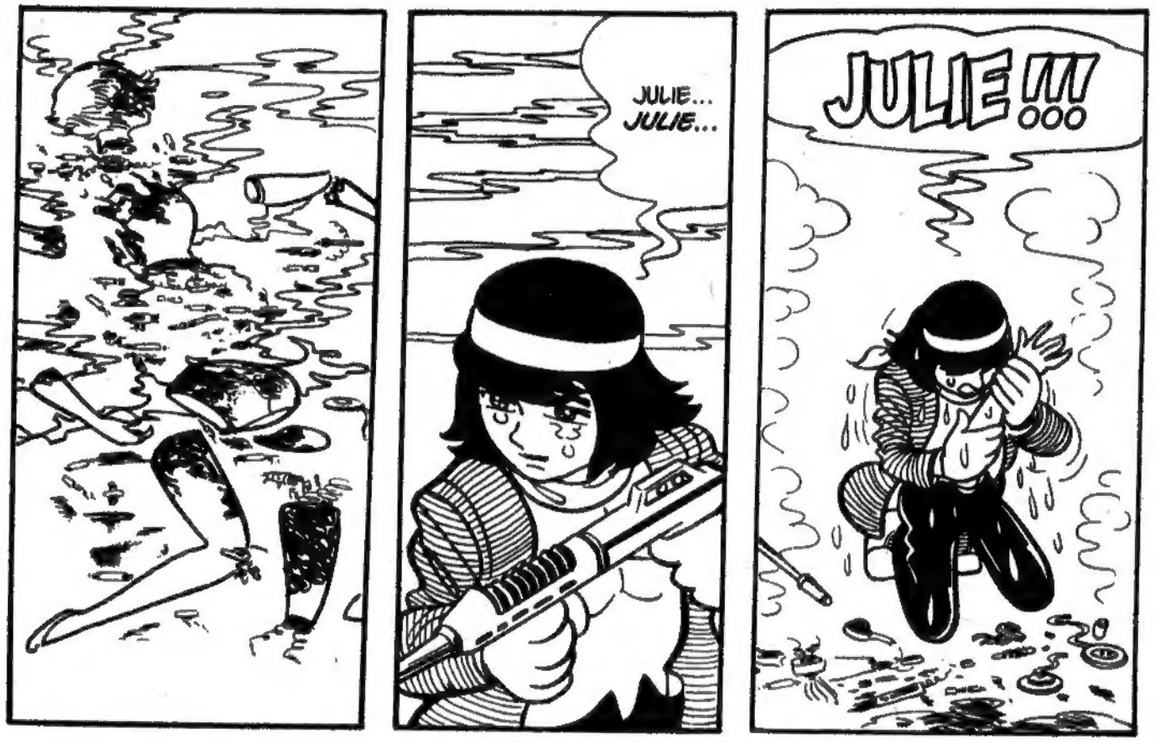
I'LL TAKE 'EM ON!!

BOOOM
VOMP
BOOM
BOOM

SO YOU WERE A ROBOT ALL ALONG!! JUST PRETENDING TO BE IN LOVE WITH ME!!
WELL, I'VE HAD ENOUGH! I'M NOT TAKING ANY MORE OF THIS!!

TAKEO... PLEASE... I LOVE YOU... I REALLY DO LOVE YOU...
WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF I'M A ROBOT AND YOU'RE A HUMAN... WE LOVE EACH OTHER, RIGHT? WHY CAN'T A ROBOT LOVE A HUMAN?

BZZZAAAP


JULIE... JULIE...
JULIE!!!

C'MON, YOU CRAZY ROBOTS! HERE'S THE HUMAN YOU'RE AFTER, WHO ESCAPED FROM THE COLISEUM! AND I JUST KILLED A ROBOT GIRL CALLED JULIE!! *COME 'N GET ME!!*

TAKEO TETSUKAWA! LISTEN CAREFULLY!

JULIE WAS ORIGINALLY A HUMAN!

THE JULIE YOU PLAYED WITH AS A CHILD WAS A HUMAN!

*BUT YOU **KILLED** HER WHEN YOU "PRETENDED" TO HANG HER! THE HUMAN JULIE ACTUALLY **DIED** THEN!*

DO YOU REMEMBER, TAKEO? JULIE'S MOTHER WENT OUT LOOKING FOR HER DAUGHTER, SAYING THAT SHE HAD RUN OFF... WELL, SHE ACTUALLY WENT TO BURY THE BODY IN THE WOODS...

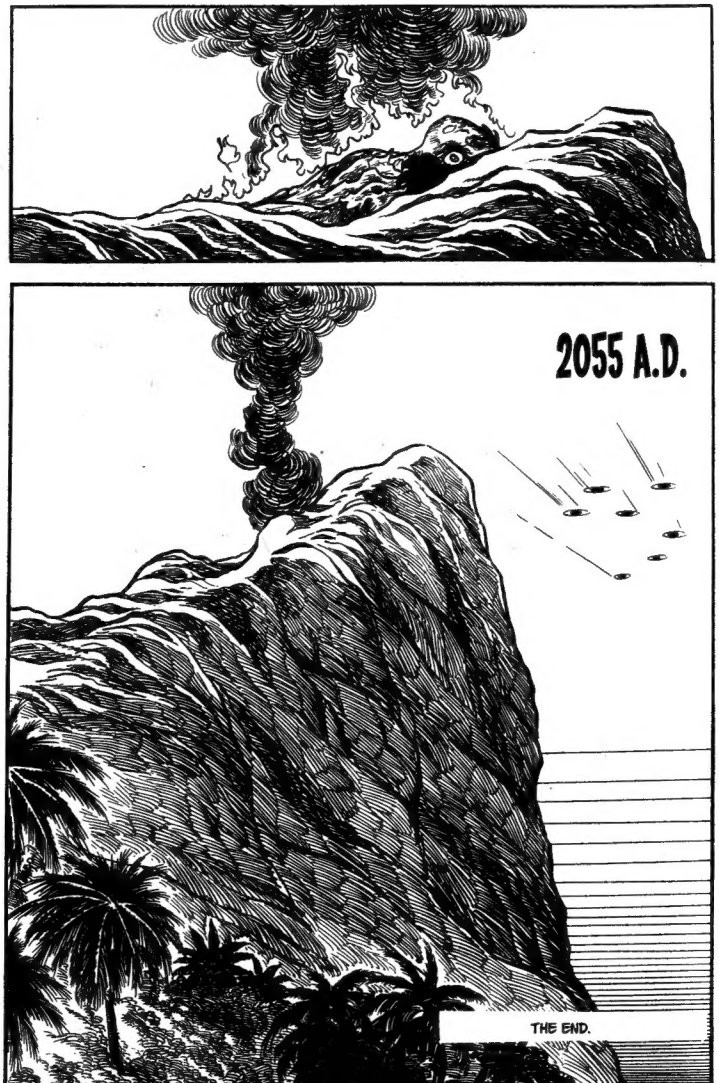
AFTER THAT, SHE SECRETLY HAD A ROBOT REPLICA MADE OF JULIE AND RAISED IT AS HER DAUGHTER...

YOU KILLED THE HUMAN JULIE, TAKEO... YOU DID...

WELL, NOW I'VE KILLED HER *TWICE*... DO WHAT YOU WANT WITH ME!! I'M *READY* FOR YOU!!

BZAAAP BZAAAP BZAAAP BZZAAP

VOMP VOMP VOMP


2055 A.D.
THE END.